# PELOUBET'S
# SELECT NOTES
## ON THE
# INTERNATIONAL
# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

1923

J. H. FLEMING
123-7 St., South
MINNEAPOLIS,
MINN.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/peloubetsselectn0000fran

Copyright 1922, by W. A. Wilde Co.

FOUNDED BY REV. FRANCIS N. PELOUBET, D.D.

# SELECT NOTES

ON THE

# INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR

# 1923

*Jesus the World's Saviour; Studies in Luke*

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE)

*Great Men and Women of the Bible*

(TWO QUARTERS, THE FIRST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE SECOND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT)

*The Missionary Message of the Bible*

(A THREE-MONTHS COURSE)

*Four full-page half-tone pictures and more than 125 illustrations in the text*

BY

AMOS R. WELLS, LITT.D., LL.D.,

FOR TWENTY YEARS DR. PELOUBET'S ASSOCIATE IN WRITING THIS BOOK

*Forty-ninth Annual Volume*

BOSTON, MASS., U.S.A.

PUBLISHED BY W. A. WILDE COMPANY

WESTERN OFFICE: CHICAGO, ILL. BOSTON, MASS.: 120 BOYLSTON ST.

# LIST OF LESSONS FOR THE YEAR


FIRST QUARTER.

**Jesus the World's Saviour**: Studies in Luke. (SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

| LESSON. | | PAGE. |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Jan. 7. JESUS HEALING ON THE SABBATH. Luke 13 | 13 |
| II. | Jan. 14. JESUS TEACHING HUMILITY. Luke 14 | 21 |
| III. | Jan. 21. THE PRODIGAL SON. Luke 15 | 27 |
| IV. | Jan. 28. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. Luke 16 | 34 |
| V. | Feb. 4. THE GRACE OF GRATITUDE. Luke 17 | 40 |
| VI. | Feb. 11. THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER. Luke 18 | 47 |
| VII. | Feb. 18. JESUS AND ZACCHÆUS. Luke 19: 1–10 | 53 |
| VIII. | Feb. 25. THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS. Luke 19: 11–48 | 60 |
| IX. | Mar. 4. JESUS TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE. Luke 20: 1—21: 38 | 66 |
| X. | Mar. 11. JESUS IN GETHSEMANE. Luke 22 | 73 |
| XI. | Mar. 18. JESUS CRUCIFIED. Luke 23 | 80 |
| XII. | Mar. 25. REVIEW: JESUS THE WORLD'S SAVIOUR | 87 |

SECOND QUARTER.

**Great Men and Women of the Bible. I. The Old Testament.** (FIRST HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Apr. 1. THE WALK TO EMMAUS. (Easter Lesson.) Luke 24 | 90 |
| II. | Apr. 8. ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH. Gen. 12: 1—25: 8; Heb. 11: 8–19 | 98 |
| III. | Apr. 15. JOSEPH, THE PRESERVER OF HIS PEOPLE. Gen. 30: 22–24; 37: 2—50: 26 | 107 |
| IV. | Apr. 22. MOSES: LIBERATOR AND LAWGIVER. Ex. 2: 1—19: 25; 32: 1—33: 23; Deut. 34: 1–8 | 115 |
| V. | Apr. 29. RUTH, THE FAITHFUL DAUGHTER. The Book of Ruth | 125 |
| VI. | May 6. SAMUEL: JUDGE AND PROPHET. 1 Sam. 1: 1—4: 1; 7: 3—10: 27; 11: 12—13: 15; 15: 1—16: 13; 25: 1; 28: 3–20 | 131 |
| VII. | May 13. DAVID, THE POET-KING. 1 Sam. 16: 1—31: 13; 2 Sam. 1: 1—24: 25; 1 Kings 1: 1—2: 12 | 139 |
| VIII. | May 20. ELIJAH, THE BRAVE REFORMER. 1 Kings 17: 1—19: 21; 21: 1–29; 2 Kings 1: 1—2: 12 | 148 |
| IX. | May 27. ISAIAH, THE STATESMAN-PROPHET. 2 Kings 18: 13—20: 19; Isa. 1: 1; 6: 1–13 | 155 |
| X. | June 3. JEREMIAH, THE PROPHET OF COURAGE. Jer. 1: 1–10; 7: 1–15; 20: 1–6; 21; 26; 32; 35: 1–19; 36; 37: 11–28; 39: 11, 12; 42: 1–11; 43: 4–10 | 161 |
| XI. | June 10. NEHEMIAH, THE BOLD BUILDER. Neh. chaps. 1 and 2; 4—6; 8: 9–12; 12: 31—13: 31 | 168 |
| XII. | June 17. ESTHER, THE PATRIOT QUEEN. The Book of Esther | 176 |
| XIII. | June 24. REVIEW: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT | 183 |

THIRD QUARTER.

**Great Men and Women of the Bible. II. The New Testament.** (SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | July 1. JOHN THE BAPTIST. Matt. 3: 1–17; 11: 2–15; Mark 6: 14–29; Luke 1: 5–80; John 1: 6–37 | 185 |
| II. | July 8. MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS. Matt. 1: 18—2: 12; 12: 46–50; Luke 1: 26–56; 2: 1–52; John 2: 1–11; 19: 25–27 | 193 |
| III. | July 15. SIMON PETER. John 1: 35–42; Matt. 4: 18–22; 14: 28–31; 17: 1–13; Luke 5: 1–10; 22: 31–34; 54–62; John 18: 10, 11; 20: 1–10; 21: 1–23; Acts 2: 1–5, 42; 8: 14–25; 9: 32—12: 19; 15: 7–11; Gal. 2: 1–11 | 203 |
| IV. | July 22. JOHN THE APOSTLE. Mark 1: 16–20; 3: 17; Luke 9: 49–56; John 13: 21–25; 19: 25–27; 21: 20–23; Acts 4: 13–20; 1 John 4: 7, 8; Rev. 1: 9 | 214 |
| V. | July 29. MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN. Matt. 9: 9–13; Luke 5: 27–32 | 222 |
| VI. | Aug. 5. MARY MAGDALENE. Luke 8: 1–3; Matt. 27: 55, 56; John 19: 25; 20: 1–18 | 228 |
| VII. | Aug. 12. MARTHA AND MARY. Luke 10: 38–42; John 11: 1—12: 8; Mark 14: 3–9 | 235 |
| VIII. | Aug. 19. STEPHEN THE MARTYR. Acts 6: 1—8: 3; 22: 20 | 243 |
| IX. | Aug. 26. BARNABAS THE GREAT-HEARTED. Acts 4: 36, 37; 9: 26–30; 11: 19–30; 12: 25; 13: 1—15: 12, 35–41; Gal. 2: 13 | 250 |
| X. | Sept. 2. PAUL THE APOSTLE. Acts 7: 54—8: 3; 9: 1–31; 11: 25–30; 13—28; Phil. 3: 4–14 | 257 |
| XI. | Sept. 9. JOHN MARK. Acts 12: 12, 25—13: 13; 15: 36–40; Col. 4: 10; 2 Tim. 4: 11; 1 Pet. 5: 13 | 266 |
| XII. | Sept. 16. LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN. Luke 1: 1–4; Acts 1: 1–5; 16: 9–18; Col. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 4: 11 | 273 |
| XIII. | Sept. 23. TIMOTHY, A GOOD MINISTER OF CHRIST JESUS. Acts 16: 1–3; Phil. 2: 19–22; 2 Tim. 1: 1–6; 3: 14, 15 | 279 |
| XIV. | Sept. 30. REVIEW: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT | 287 |

FOURTH QUARTER.

**The Missionary Message of the Bible.** (A THREE-MONTHS COURSE.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Oct. 7. ABRAHAM, A BLESSING TO THE WHOLE WORLD. Gen. 12: 1–4; 18: 17, 18; 22: 1–18; Heb. 11: 8–10, 17–19 | 290 |
| II. | Oct. 14. ISRAEL, A MISSIONARY NATION. Ex. 19: 1–6; Isa. 43: 9–11; 45: 20–22 | 298 |
| III. | Oct. 21. ISRAEL IN THE MIDST OF THE NATIONS. Josh. 1: 1–4; Deut. 4: 5, 6; 8: 7–10; Isa. 2: 2–4; 19: 23–25; Ezek. 5: 5 | 304 |
| IV. | Oct. 28. SOME MISSIONARY TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHETS. Isa. 60: 1–3; Jonah 4: 10, 11; Mic. 4: 1–3; Zeph. 3: 9 | 310 |
| V. | Nov. 4. WORLD-WIDE PROHIBITION. — WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY. Ps. 101: 1–8; Prov. 23: 29–35 | 317 |
| VI. | Nov. 11. SOME MISSIONARY TEACHINGS OF THE PSALMS. Ps. 47: 1–9; 67: 1–7; 100: 1–5 | 323 |
| VII. | Nov. 18. OUR LORD JESUS A MISSIONARY. Matt. 9: 35–38; Mark 1: 29–39; Luke 8: 1–3; 10: 1; John 3: 16, 17 | 328 |
| VIII. | Nov. 25. CHRISTIANS CALLED TO BE MISSIONARIES. John 17: 18; Matt. 28: 16–20; Acts 1: 6–8 | 337 |
| IX. | Dec. 2. THE POWER OF THE EARLY CHURCH. Acts 2: 1—8: 1 | 343 |
| X. | Dec. 9. THE OUTREACH OF THE EARLY CHURCH. Acts 8: 1—15: 35 | 349 |
| XI. | Dec. 16. WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS. Acts 16: 1—28: 31; Rom. 15: 18–21; Eph. 3: 2–9 | 357 |
| XII. | Dec. 23. THE UNIVERSAL REIGN OF CHRIST — Christmas Lesson. Isa. 9: 6, 7; 11: 1–10; Ps. 2: 1–12 | 364 |
| XIII. | Dec. 30. REVIEW: THE WORLD FOR CHRIST | 371 |



COPYRIGHTED, 1922, BY AMOS R. WELLS, AUBURNDALE, MASS.


ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL, LONDON. PUBLISHED NOV. 1, 1922. MADE IN U. S. A.

## WILDE'S BIBLE PICTURE SET.

*Illustrating the International Improved Uniform Sunday School Lessons for 1923.*

**Sixty pictures enclosed in portfolio, 90 cents postpaid.**

### First Quarter

*Lesson 1.*
724 Healing of the Aged Woman. Bida.

*Lesson 2.*
245 A Dervish Beggar.

*Lesson 3.*
106 The Prodigal Son. E. Dubufe.

*Lesson 4.*
107 The Rich Man and Lazarus. Doré.

*Lesson 5.*
688 Jesus Healing the Ten Lepers.

*Lesson 6.*
108 The Pharisee and the Publican. Doré.

*Lesson 7.*
729 Zacchæus.

*Lesson 8.*
728 Jesus and the Multitude of People.

*Lesson 9.*
127 The Widow's Mite. Doré.

*Lesson 10.*
136 Jesus in Gethsemane. Hofmann.

*Lesson 11.*
148 The Crucifixion. Hofmann.

*Lesson 12.*
Review

### Second Quarter

*Lesson 1.*
164 Walk to Emmaus. B. Plockhorst.

*Lesson 2.*
350 Abraham's Journeying into the Land of Canaan. Doré.

*Lesson 3.*
372 Joseph Making Himself Known to His Brothers. Doré.

*Lesson 4.*
378 Finding of Moses. Paul Delaroche.
609 Destruction of Pharaoh's Host. John Martin.

*Lesson 5.*
414 Ruth and Naomi. Philip H. Calderon.

*Lesson 6.*
417 Samuel. Sir Joshua Reynolds.
472 Samuel Anointing Saul. Julius von Schnorr.

*Lesson 7.*
475 First Anointing of David. Julius von Schnorr.

*Lesson 8.*
660 Elijah Claiming the Hospitality of the Woman of Zarephath.
493 Elijah's Sacrifice.

*Lesson 9.*
777 Isaiah. Sargent.

*Lesson 10.*
516 Baruch Writing Jeremiah's Prophecy. Doré.

*Lesson 11.*
798 Nehemiah's Midnight Ride. Doré.

*Lesson 12.*
530 Esther before Ahasuerus. Veronese.

*Lesson 13.*
Review.

### Third Quarter

*Lesson 1.*
42 John the Baptist. Andrea del Sarto.
43 John the Baptist Preaching. Titian.

*Lesson 2.*
327 Madonna and Child. (Detail from Holy Night.) Correggio.
34 Jesus Twelve Years Old on His Way to Jerusalem. Mengelburg.

*Lesson 3.*
453 St. Peter. Fra Bartolommeo.

*Lesson 4.*
278 St. John the Evangelist. Carlo Dolci.

*Lesson 5.*
57 Calling of Matthew. Bida.

*Lesson 6.*
268 The Penitent Magdalene. Carlo Dolci.

*Lesson 7.*
114 Bethany. H. Hofmann.

*Lesson 8.*
392 The Stoning of Stephen. Beato Angelico.

*Lesson 9.*
286 Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. Raphael.

*Lesson 10.*
284 The Conversion of St. Paul. Raphael.
452 St. Paul. Fra Bartolommeo.

*Lesson 11.*
277 St. Mark. Fra Bartolommeo.

*Lesson 12.*
799 St. Luke the Evangelist. Bida.

*Lesson 13.*
800 Timothy Learning the Scriptures.

*Lesson 14.*
Review.

### Fourth Quarter

*Lesson 1.*
351 The Calling of Abraham. Doré.
357 The Trial of Abraham's Faith. Doré.

*Lesson 2.*
391 Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Doré.
709 Ascent to Mount Sinai.

*Lesson 3.*
Outline Map: The Ancient Eastern World.

*Lesson 4.*
667 Jonah Calling Nineveh to Repentance.

*Lesson 5.*
663 St. Michael Slaying the Dragon. Raphael.

*Lesson 6.*
402 Chorister Boys. Mrs. Anderson.
481 King David. Domenichino.

*Lesson 7.*
69 Healing the Sick. Schonherr.

*Lesson 8.*
171 The Ascension. Hofmann.
758 The Apostles Preaching in Jerusalem.

*Lesson 9.*
394 The Day of Pentecost. Adrian Van der Werff.

*Lesson 10.*
739 Philip and the Eunuch.
801 Philip Preaching.

*Lesson 11.*
764 "The Place of Prayer by the Riverside."

*Lesson 12.*
14 The Angels and the Shepherds. Plockhorst.
10 The Nativity. Bouguereau.

*Lesson 13.*
Review.

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

The numbers in the second column continue those in the list given last year.

| LESSONS | No. | EVENTS | DATE | MATT. | MARK | LUKE | JOHN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.D. 29 | | | | |
| I. | 42. | Healing on the Sabbath | Nov.–Dec. | . . . | . . . | 13: 1–35 | . . . |
| | 43. | At the feast of the dedication | Dec. 20–27 | . . . | . . . | . . . | 10: 22–39 |
| | | | A.D. 30 | | | | |
| | 44. | Retiring beyond Jordan | January | . . . | . . . | . . . | 10: 40–42 |
| II. | 45. | Dining with a Pharisee | " | . . . | . . . | 14: 1–35 | . . . |
| III. | 46. | Parable of the prodigal son | " | . . . | . . . | 15: 11–32 | . . . |
| IV. | 47. | The rich man and Lazarus | " | . . . | . . . | 16: 19–31 | . . . |
| | 48. | The raising of Lazarus | February | . . . | . . . | . . . | 11: 1–46 |
| V. | 49. | Ten lepers healed | March | . . . | . . . | 17: 11–19 | . . . |
| VI. | 50. | Parables on prayer | " | . . . | . . . | 18: 1–14 | . . . |
| | 51. | Blessing little children. | " | 19: 13–16 | 10: 13–16 | 18: 15–17 | . . . |
| | 52. | The rich young ruler | " | 19: 16–30 | 10: 17–31 | 18: 18–30 | . . . |
| | 53. | Two blind men of Jericho | " | 20: 29–34 | 10: 46–52 | 18: 35–43 | . . . |
| VII. | 54. | Visit to Zacchæus | " | . . . | . . . | 19: 1–10 | . . . |
| VIII. | 55. | Parable of the pounds | " | . . . | . . . | 19: 11–28 | . . . |
| | 56. | Anointing by Mary | Sat. Apr. 1 | 26: 6–13 | 14: 39 | . . . | 12: 2–11 |
| | 57. | Triumphal entry | Sun. Apr. 2 | 21: 1–11 | 11: 1–11 | 19: 29–44 | 12: 12–19 |
| IX. | 58. | Teaching in the temple | Tues. Apr. 4 | 21—26 | 11—14 | 20, 21 | 12: 20–50 |
| | 59. | The Lord's Supper | Thu. Apr. 6 | 26: 26–29 | 14: 22–25 | 22: 19, 20 | 13—17 |
| X. | 60. | Jesus in Gethsemane | " " " | 26: 36–40 | 14: 32–42 | 22: 40–46 | . . . |
| | 61. | The trials of Jesus | Fri. " 7 | 26, 27 | 14, 15 | 22, 23 | 18, 19 |
| XI. | 62. | Jesus crucified | " " " | 27 | 15 | 23 | 19 |
| | 63. | Resurrection of Jesus | Sun. Apr. 9 | 28 | 16 | 24 | 20, 21 |
| | 64. | Ascension of Jesus | Thu. May 18 | . . . | 16: 19 | 24: 50–53 | . . . |

### THIS YEAR'S LESSONS.

Never have the Uniform Lessons presented to the Sunday-school world a series of studies so varied, novel, interesting, and fundamentally important as those of 1923. We begin with the concluding half of the six-months course in Luke's Gospel, upon which we entered in the fall of 1922. We are to study the last half of this beautiful book, the closing scenes of our Lord's life on earth.

Next we have a new feature, six months of Bible biography, one Sunday with each person. Heretofore we have had many successive lessons on such lives as those of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Elijah, Peter, John, and Paul. Now we take a quick survey of each life in one lesson. The advantage of this fresh mode of treatment is obvious, and millions will gain from it a new view of the great men and women of the Bible.

The closing quarter of the year is another novelty, a study of the missionary teachings of the Bible. It passes through the entire range of Holy Writ and emphasizes in a way that never will be forgotten the missionary character of the Book.

This year affords convincing proof, if any were needed, of the inherent vitality of the Uniform Lessons. They are not stereotyped, fixed in expensive books, unchanged for decades. They are responsive, growing, full of fresh energy, and ever improving from year to year. They hold to the best of the past, and reach out eagerly into the best of the future.

### THE REST OF THIS CYCLE.

We are within two years of the end of the first " cycle " of Improved Uniform Lessons. That cycle began with 1918 and closes with 1925 — eight years. The next cycle will probably be one of six years.

This cycle has given us, in its first six years, studies in Mark, Matthew, and Luke, including for the older classes every word of those Gospels. It has also given us six months of studies in the lives and writings of Peter and John. We have had half a year in Paul's life and writings. Our Old Testament studies have carried us through the entire Old Testament history. We have had extensive, valuable, and fascinating topical studies: " The Christian Life," " Great Teachings of the Bible," " Social Teachings of the Bible," " Great Men and Women of the Bible," " The Missionary Message of the Bible." It has been a remarkably varied and rich six years of Bible study.

We are to conclude the cycle with a two-years survey of the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. This is the first time that the Uniform series — or any other International series — has undertaken to go straight through the Bible from cover to cover. It will be an experience full of profit and delight. We are confident that, as the millions of Sunday-school students make this two-year pilgrimage, they will find uncounted joys, and will come to the end of the course with hallelujahs.

## WHY ADAPTATIONS?

We are studying the Improved Uniform Lessons. Why are they called Improved? For several reasons, but chiefly because the main topic and Bible passage is adapted by the Lesson Committee to the needs and powers of each department of the school. For the younger grades the simpler aspects of the lesson are selected, with the simplest portions of the Bible passage; the older grades study the lesson in its fullest and profoundest form; while the grades between the two have work of medium difficulty.

Thus in the lesson for May 20, the life of Elijah, the little folks in the Primary classes study the beautiful story of Elijah and the poor woman; the Juniors are thrilled by the account of the prophet's victory on Mt. Carmel; the Intermediates and Seniors review Elijah's entire life, especially noting its defiance of wickedness; and the Young People and Adults consider "What Modern Reformers Can Learn from Elijah."

Thus each department of the school has a lesson that is within its range and suited to its needs and likings, while the entire school is unified in thought and study. The older classes include in the broad scope of their Bible passage all that the younger classes are studying. Thus parents can talk over the lesson with their children, and help them study it. Thus it is easy for the superintendent to find substitute teachers for all classes. These "adaptations" are the heart of the Improved Uniform Lessons. The Sunday-school Lesson Committee has voted to abandon them, beginning with next year, 1924, in the Primary and Junior departments, desiring that those departments should give up the Uniform Lessons and use instead a new system of graded lessons called Group Lessons, which are graded lessons departmentally treated. In our judgment this is a step backward, giving up a great gain for the sake of a theory which the practical workers of the Sunday school have tried and found wanting. The Adaptations should be made by the Lesson Committee for all grades of the school, in the future as in the past.

## WHY ONLY ONE TREATMENT HERE?

We are sometimes asked why, since we advocate departmental adaptations of the Uniform Lessons and use them in the other helps of this series, we do not use them in *Select Notes*. It is partly because of space limitations. To give a separate treatment of the lessons for each department of the school would require a book twice as large as the present, selling at twice the price. It would be out of the question.

But also it is unnecessary. The special departmental treatment is given in the quarterlies and teachers' magazines, and is not needed here. What *Select Notes* aims to do is to furnish that firm, broad, and adequate foundation for the lessons that teachers in all departments need and must have before they can introduce and use any special plans for their classes. The facts underlying the lessons are the same for all grades. All teachers must understand the Bible passage. Most of the illustrations are simple enough to appeal to all pupils. Teachers of the youngest classes need as thorough preparation as teachers of adult classes — a preparation even more thorough, I sometimes think! All the space at our disposal is none too much to furnish what every teacher needs before he can safely stand before his class.

## THE PURPOSE OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING.

Many Sunday-school teachers, and many helps written for them, fail to keep clearly and constantly in mind the central purpose of all Sunday-school teaching that is worth while.

The Sunday school is not worth while merely to teach Jewish history. It is an interesting history and an important one, a history well worth studying in itself, well worth teaching in our secular schools; but the secular schools do not regard it as worth teaching when compared with the history of Greece and Rome, of England

and the United States. It would be absurd to set up thousands of schools merely to teach Jewish history.

Also if the Bible is regarded merely as literature, the Sunday schools are not worth while. The Bible is great literature. Nothing in any language is more sublime than Isaiah and Job, more beautiful than the Psalms, wiser than the Gospels and the Epistles. The secular schools are waking up to the literary value of the Bible and will doubtless study it more and more from that point of view, just as they study Shakespeare and Milton and Bacon and Macaulay. The secular schools give our boys and girls all the literary studies they need or can absorb, and Sunday schools that studied the Bible merely as literature would be a superfluity.

Even in the realm of morality, the Sunday school would not be worth while, if that were all. The children are taught to obey in their secular schools. They are taught there to be honest, to be prompt, to be neat and respectful and persevering and accurate. Patriotism is inculcated in the public schools, and civic loyalty; service to the community and to the state. Morality, man's duty in relation to other men, is taught the child in a thousand ways and is impressed upon us from the cradle to the grave. Every true home, every secular school, every pulpit, every decent shop or office or factory, is a school of morality.

But there is one thing that the Sunday schools must teach, if it is to be taught at all to many children, and that is religion. It is not enough to say that character-making is the aim of the Sunday school, for morality helps to make character, and so do even history and literature. But history, literature, and morality without religion are like a watch without its mainspring, a locomotive without fire under the boiler, an electric bulb without an electric current.

The Sunday-school teacher will teach Jewish history and the literature of the Hebrews, he will certainly inculcate morality, but he will cause these to glow with the spirit of religion. The state, he will show, is — or should be — part of the Kingdom of God, and we are to be loyal to the state so far as it is in harmony with God's will and because it is an expression of God's will. The boys and girls are to obey their fathers and mothers and teachers because God wants them to be obedient, and because they love God. The thought of God and the love of God are to fill all their lives.

The Bible never becomes a vital factor in a life until it is perceived to be a personal message from a loving Father. Christ never becomes more than a vague and shadowy figure in the past until he is realized as an ever-present Saviour from sin and partner in service. It is to make the Bible thus real and Christ thus personal and present that Sunday schools exist and Sunday-school teachers do their work.

By this test all Sunday-school programmes and courses of study and methods of teaching and forms of organization are to be judged. By this test we are to select the Sunday-school leaders whom we will follow, as officers of our school and as guides and directors of the Sunday-school associations. By this test we are to examine and weigh our own work as Sunday-school teachers. Is the fundamental purpose to bring the pupils close to Christ and hold them there? If it is not, then a dry rot will set in, will pervade all our schools, and will cause them gradually to fall into decay. But if that is our purpose, and we are ever true to it, our schools will grow in numbers, increase in strength and blessedness, and be in the future what they have been in the past, one of the mightiest forces working for the incoming of the Kingdom of God.

## PREPARATION FOR TEACHING.

When Sunday-school teaching is not a success, usually it is because the teacher has not prepared to make it a success. Sunday-school success is not a haphazard affair, it is not a matter of chance or of luck, it is the result of wise plans persistently pursued. Given a fair degree of aptitude, the right kind of preparation will render success certain.

Preparation to teach the next Sunday-school lesson should begin as soon as the last lesson has been taught. On Sunday afternoon the wise teacher will read the lesson for the next Sunday, together with his teacher's helps, and will get a clear outline of the work to be done. Then he will be ready to give the lesson during the week the constructive, fruitful thinking that brings results.

Along what lines will he think during the week, if he would prepare himself most fully?

In the first place, he will pray earnestly, at the start and all the way along. The

guidance of the Holy Spirit is essential, for his own understanding of the subject, for the formation of the best teaching plans, and for aid in the actual teaching. The sincerity and persistence of his prayers will furnish the chief part of his preparation.

In the second place, he will review his class, and consider how the lesson may be made to help each one of them. That is what the lesson is for — not to show off the teacher, not to instruct the pupils merely, but to aid the pupils in their religious life.

In the third place, he will determine what is the teaching of the lesson which must be reached and driven home no matter what is omitted. If that is not kept clearly in view, it may be left out of account; and that would mean failure.

In the fourth place, he will note what points of difficulty may be involved in the lesson, so that he can remove them in the deftest manner. If a doubt is allowed to remain, or an uncertainty, it will do much to neutralize the effect of the teaching.

In the fifth place, he will see what can be done to enliven the lesson, enrich it, add to its compelling interest, fix it in the memory. It may be an illustration, or an object-talk, or a picture, or some blackboard work, or a bit of poetry, or a little story, or a personal experience. One of these or several of them will add much to the lesson, and a little pains in this direction is gloriously worth while.

In the sixth place, he will plan his lesson, having by this time collected a sufficient amount of teaching material. He will consider how he will begin, since the first five minutes of a lesson usually determine all the rest of the time. He will devise some unusual bit of method to brighten up the teaching process, — perhaps a question tournament, a ten-minute written quiz, or the reading of a letter concerning the lesson's events written in the character of one of the persons of the lesson. And finally, he will make up his mind just how to end the lesson and drive its teaching home.

A lesson thus carefully prepared, with a prayer for God's blessing on the preparation sealing the whole, is a lesson that God can lead to success. Coming from him, it will not return to him void. With such preparation the teacher can face his class confidently, sure that he is bearing God's message, that he has the companionship of his Saviour, and the guiding support of the Holy Spirit.

## THE ART OF QUESTIONING.

Few things are so important in teaching as the art of asking a good question. Many teachers that are otherwise successful fail here, and this lack vitiates the whole work.

A good question is short and snappy, easily grasped by the pupil. If the mind is trying to comprehend the question, it cannot be thinking about the answer. " Why, in comparison with the prayer offered by the publican, is the prayer offered by the Pharisee to be regarded as unworthy? " That is a poor question. " What was wrong with the Pharisee's prayer? " That is a good question.

A good question starts the mind to thinking. A leading question, therefore, is never a good question except when it is quickly followed by a genuine query. " May we not consider, then, that Elijah was worn out, physically and mentally, when he ran away from Jezebel? " That question makes no demand whatever upon one's brain, and might as well have remained unuttered. " What possessed Elijah to run away from Jezebel? " That question will get results.

A good question is to be phrased in the vernacular, like those that have just been cited. A stilted, formal question means wandering minds. A natural question, as brisk as if shouted across the street from one neighbor to another, keeps every one awake. For example, do not ask, " What were the architectural divisions and general characteristics of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem? " Say rather, " What's your idea of the Temple? "

Often, to arouse interest and hold attention, a startling or sharp or bright and amusing question may be shot into the midst of a lesson. " Ever see Rehoboam, Bill? " " How long would it take you to walk across Jerusalem, Sam? " " Any character of our lesson you'd like to be introduced to, Lucy? "

A good question is usually directed toward some special pupil, who is named. Only when the interest of the class is at white heat is it safe to throw a question out vaguely into the air, in the hope that some one will catch it.

The art of asking questions implies a thorough familiarity with the subject. If you have to feel around after your question material, you cannot form questions which will be decisive, interesting, and arousing.

Indeed, it is well for all beginners, and for the experienced also now and then, to write out sets of questions before attempting to teach the class. Not that the questions will be read in the class, but that the teacher may develop his interrogative skill and keep out of interrogative ruts. In a matter of so great importance it is impossible to take too great pains.

## THE CLASS ORDER.

Some teachers find it almost impossible to maintain the discipline of their classes. Other teachers, no better equipped mentally, perhaps of inferior ability and training, can yet take the same classes and with no difficulty maintain perfect order. What is the reason for the difference? Is it a mysterious, inborn faculty with which one set of teachers is favored and the other not? Is it all a matter of chance?

No, not at all. The keeping of order is essentially within the possibilities of every teacher, if only the conditions are observed.

What are these conditions? The first calls for physical health. Few can keep order outside when their interiors are in flaming disorder. If you have a headache, if your digestion is wretched, if your nerves are in shrieking rebellion against their tasks, your physical restlessness will be communicated to your pupils, and they will join in the revolt of your bodily organs.

The second essential for discipline is loving sympathy. You must heartily like your pupils, every one of them. No one has any business trying to teach a boy or girl whom he does not like. If you do not like them, you cannot keep them from knowing it. If you really love them, they will know that also, and their wills will instinctively range themselves alongside your will.

The third essential is serenity. No fussy teacher can keep his pupils quiet and attentive. Possess your own soul in peace, and you will hold the souls of your pupils in peaceful attention. Go to your class in the conquering spirit. It has been said that Napoleon won his battles largely because he was absolutely sure that he would win them. Such a confidence in yourself will go far toward making conquest of your class.

Finally, when disorder breaks out, make it your immediate task to bring it to an end. You cannot wisely go on till it stops. It may be only a slight disorder, but it will soon grow into an overwhelming disorder. It is easily stopped now, but it will become something very hard to stop. Nothing is so important for you or your class as to bring the class to perfect order. No teaching of the lesson is so important as this, right now and here. Make your pupils realize that they may leave the class, but that while they are in it there is one thing they may not do: they may not disturb the orderly teaching and learning of the lesson.

## OUTSIDE THE CLASS.

The teacher whose intercourse with his pupils is confined to the sessions of the Sunday school is missing half his effectiveness. It is outside of the class that he has a chance to clinch his teaching, while the grasp he gains on his pupils' affections and interest outside the class will help him wonderfully to win attention and hold interest during the class sessions.

At least once a month the wide-awake teacher will contrive to entertain his class in his own home. Jolly games will be the order of the day, with perhaps an equally jolly sing and of course plenty of "eats."

Some social occasion of the sort will not be amiss even in the classes of young men and women and adults. One of the pleasantest series of the kind was managed by a class of which I once had charge, a class of young men. They were in many different kinds of work, and each took an evening and told about his business. I remember that the most interesting evenings were the three conducted by the fish-dealer, the traveller for a shoe-factory, and the clerk in a men's furnishing store.

Outside affairs with your pupils will also prove enjoyable and worth while — long walks to historic or beautiful spots, perhaps a bird walk or a flower walk or a tree walk, certainly a picnic now and then, with hilarious outdoor games and sports.

If the teacher is at all athletic, let him now and then join in football or baseball with the boys, or let her join in basket ball or tennis with the girls. You can get very close to your pupils in such friendly contests, and at the same time there is opportunity for many a lesson in practical Christianity.

If the teacher goes on a journey, or if the pupil is away from the school for a time

because of sickness or because he also is on a journey, the teacher will jump at the chance of a friendly letter; a letter with a word of higher things in it, but chiefly just the kind of letter that any friend would write to another. These letters will bind teacher and pupil wonderfully together, and will not be forgotten.

Much is written about the calls that the teacher should make on the pupil, and not too much is said on that important matter. The calls should be jolly, hit-or-miss, just-run-in-to-see-you affairs, and the first ones should have some unavoidable reason — which the teacher will manufacture! The essential thing is for the teacher to see as much of his pupils as possible outside his class, and make himself as much as possible a part of their lives. As he becomes their friend he will have a chance to introduce to them his own Infinite Friend, and bind them to Him with cords of love.

## MAINTAIN A TEACHERS' MEETING

One of the great advantages of the Uniform Series of Sunday-school lessons is that with them a teachers' meeting may be maintained that will not merely discuss the affairs of the school and the art of teaching in general, but will study the lesson that is to be taught the following Sunday, and discuss the best ways of teaching that lesson in the different grades.

This meeting will be an inestimable advantage to the school and to the teachers. It should be held on a regular evening, from which you will depart only for the best of reasons. It may be held in the church, but it will gain much if it is held at the homes of the teachers, turn about, each meeting being closed with very simple refreshments (insist on their inexpensiveness) and with a happy social period.

The essential of a teachers' meeting is a good executive, who will provide a programme and see that it is carried out every week. This executive may be the school superintendent or some one whom he may appoint. He need not be a speaker at all; in fact, it will be better if he does not teach the lesson to the teachers, but presides and brings out the contributions of the others.

For the ideal teachers' meeting is a symposium. Every teacher, if it is a small school, will be made responsible for some part of the programme. Give him a title. He may be the geographer, and will tell about the place or places involved in the lesson, showing pictures and using the map. He may be the antiquarian, describing the unfamiliar customs, implements, garments, etc., mentioned in the lesson. He may be the historian, discussing the lesson's date, its historical setting, the events intervening between this lesson and the last. He may be the lexicographer, explaining the unusual words in the lesson, and bringing out the full meaning of the original Greek or Hebrew. He may be the theologian, setting forth the doctrines which the lesson teaches. He may be the illustrator, showing the teachers how to illuminate the lesson with anecdotes, bits of poetry, object-talks, blackboard-talk, and the like. He may be the questioner, bringing in a list of bright and effective questions which he will propound as samples of the way in which the teachers may draw out their pupils. He may be the "applier," showing how the lesson is to be applied practically to the lives of the pupils in the different grades. He may be the "comparer," placing other Bible passages alongside the passage for the day, throwing upon it light from all parts of Holy Writ. And you may add other phases of the work, assigning each, with an appropriate title, to a different teacher. Once or twice a year these assignments may be redistributed, so as to prevent monotony and develop new abilities.

Of course, if you can get some one of distinguished and multiform power to teach the teachers' meeting, some one who will not go stale and will hold the teachers' enthusiasm year after year, that will be by far the easier plan; but the plan above outlined will get better results because it divides the work, is more democratic, and causes the teachers to give and not merely to receive. And the leader of such a meeting, it will be observed, has no teaching to do, though he may put in stimulating thoughts as often as he likes; his is an executive task, to keep things running.

A teachers' meeting of this type will not close without time spent in discussing some general principle of teaching presented by an experienced and thoughtful person; and also some time spent in considering the general condition of the school, the superintendent or some other school officer being the leader here. And certainly it will not close without much earnest prayer. A teachers' meeting on this plan is easily organized in any community, though the community contains no one person that would have courage or ability to take entire charge of the meeting. Several

schools could combine with fine results. It is a coöperative teachers' meeting, in harmony with the spirit of the age. Each gives something, and each carries away much.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

This year's lessons required the consultation of more books than any former year of the International Series, and we have quoted in the following pages from more books than ever before, but the general bibliography must be comparatively brief. This is because of the wide range of the lessons, and their individuality. Each lesson of the half year of biographical studies and the quarter of missionary studies called for a separate set of books. These are named in the section, "The Teacher's Library," prefixed to each lesson, and it would serve no useful purpose to repeat them here. We name in the following list only a few of the books that are generally consulted in Bible study, characterizing most of them briefly.

It must not be supposed, of course, that in naming a book in the following list, or in the "Teacher's Library," or in quoting from it in the commentary, we are endorsing all or any of the opinions of the book except those we quote. We bring together here an immense amount of material for the illumination of the Sunday-school lessons. We gather it from many sources, selecting only what we regard as helpful to the teachers and students of the Word of God. But this book is not in any sense a guide to theological literature.

As to the mooted points in theology, now so hotly discussed, we believe that on important matters our readers desire to have statements of both sides, and have a right to such statements. We give them as fairly as we can, though our own opinions, which are on most questions strongly conservative, may occasionally color our remarks!

Bible Dictionaries. There are three Bible Dictionaries of considerable size, all of them fairly recent. The latest is *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, edited by Orr (Howard-Severance Co.), five volumes. This is soundly conservative. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, edited by Cheyne and Black (Macmillan), four volumes. This is extremely radical. *Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by Hastings (Scribner's), five volumes. This occupies an intermediate position, on the whole. One-volume dictionaries are those by Peloubet and Adams (Winston), conservative; Davis (Westminster), conservative; Jacobus (Funk & Wagnalls), Hastings (Scribner's), Ewing and Thomson (Dutton), Piercy (Dutton), etc.

Commentaries on the Entire Bible (some of them still in process of publication). *Cambridge Bible* (Putnam), an extended series, the books treated by different authors, conservative and radical, and of uneven value. The same is true of all the following that are by different writers, as most of the series are. *New Century Bible* (Oxford University). *Bible for Home and School* (Macmillan). *International Critical Commentary* (Scribner's — uniformly radical). Ellicott's. *Expositor's Bible*. *Pulpit Commentary* (old but valuable, especially its expository sections). *Speaker's Commentary*. Parker's *People's Bible*. Butler's *Bible Work*. *Westminster Commentaries* (Gorham). *American Commentaries* (American Baptist Publication Society). Miller's *Devotional Hours* (Doran). Maclaren's *Expositions* (Doran) — eloquent and wise, a great series of volumes. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible* (Scribner's), a wonderful mosaic of the work of thousands of writers and preachers. One-volume commentaries are those by Dummelow, radical in the book introductions (Macmillan); Gray, conservative (Revell); Peake, radical (Nelson), etc.

Bible Biographies (series often referred to in the second and third quarters). The following are by various authors: *Men of the Bible Series* (Revell), *Men of the Old Testament, Men of the New Testament, Women of the Bible* (Jennings and Graham), *Temple Bible Characters* (Lippincott). The following are each by one writer: F. B. Meyer's series (Revell), William M. Taylor's series (Harper's), Whyte's *Bible Characters* (Revell), Matheson's *Representative Men and Women of the Bible* (Doran), Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible* (Scribner's), Wharton's *Famous Men and Women of the Old Testament* (E. B. Treat), Amos R. Wells's *Bible Miniatures* (Revell), Gordon's *Prophets and Poets of the Old Testament* (Doran), Mackay's *The Woman of Tact* (Doran), Sangster's *Women of the Bible* (Christian Herald), Broughton's *Representative Women of the Bible* (Pepper), Horton's *Women of the Old Testament* (Herrick), Adeney's *Women of the New Testament* (Herrick), Brown's *Nameless Women of the Bible* (American Tract Society), and many others.

LIVES OF CHRIST. Recently published: Paterson-Smyth's *A People's Life of Christ* (Revell), Lees's *The Life of Christ* (Dodd, Mead, and Company), Campbell's *The Life of Christ* (Appleton). The great standard lives by Farrar, Edersheim, Geikie, and Stalker. Other lives of Christ by Gibson (Revell), Hill (Revell), Martin (Appleton), Davis (Revell), Anderson (Macmillan), Barton (Pilgrim Press), Dawson (Jacobs), Peters (Revell), Gilbert (Macmillan), Rhees (Scribner's), Scott (Dutton), E. S. Phelps (Houghton Mifflin Company), Sangster (Revell), Beecher, Abbott (Harper), Andrew (Scribner's), Horton (Revell), Boardman (Appleton), Deems, Ellicott, Hanna, Holtzmann, Pressensé, Talmage. Many other less complete works on Christ's life referred to in the following pages.

THE LIFE OF PAUL. The chief recent work is *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, by David Smith, D.D. (Doran). The leading present-day writer on Paul is Sir William Ramsay, whose important books are published by Doran, except *Pictures of the Apostolic Church* (Sunday School Times). The standard lives are by Farrar, Lewin, and Conybeare and Howson. Brief but inspiring lives by Stalker (American Tract Society), Iverach (Revell), William M. Taylor (Harper), Meyer (Revell), Eleanor D. Wood (Pilgrim Press), Alice D. Adams (*The Heralds of the King* — a delightful little book: published by Badger).

BIBLE HISTORIES. Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church* (Scribner's). Beecher's *Dated Events of the Old Testament*, a valuable work on chronology (Sunday School Times). Geikie's *Hours with the Bible* and *New Testament Hours*. Edersheim's *History of Israel and Judah* (Revell). Ottley's *Short History of the Hebrews* (Macmillan). Kent's historical series (Scribner's). Wade's *Old Testament History*. Grant's *The Orient in Bible Times* (Lippincott).

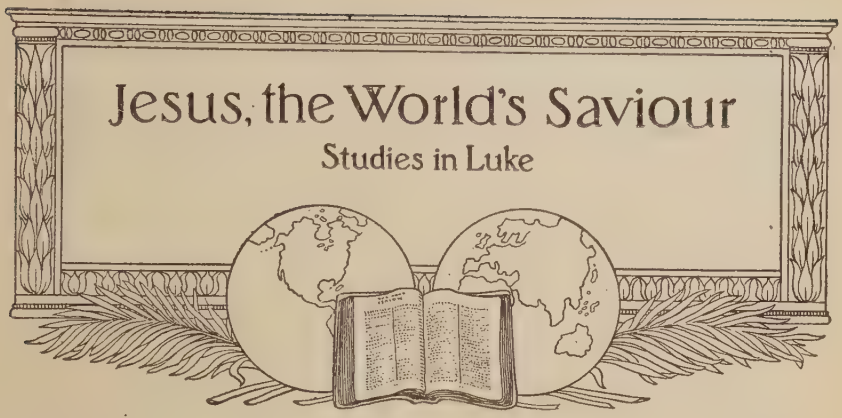
BIBLE GEOGRAPHY. George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* (Doran). Calkin's *Historical Geography of Bible Lands* (Westminster). Barton's *Archæology and the Bible* (American Sunday School Union). Thomson's *The Land and the Book*. Geikie's *The Holy Land and the Bible*. Hilprecht's *Explorations in Bible Lands* (Holman). Van Lennep's *Bible Lands* (Harper). Tristram's *Bible Places*. Price's *The Monuments and the Old Testament*, etc.

## SURPLUS MATERIAL.

After you are through with this volume of *Select Notes*, it will be immensely useful to some missionary who is far from libraries. The pictures of Bible scenes, the quarterlies and other helps, the Christmas and Easter exercises used by your Sunday school, together with scrapbooks, papers, and books for which you have no further use, all these would be utilized by these workers in the hard and destitute places. You can get addresses of missionaries in this country and abroad if you will write to Rev. Samuel D. Price, D.D., superintendent of the Surplus Material Department of the World's Sunday School Association, whose address is 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York City. In writing to Dr. Price be sure to name your denomination and enclose a stamp for reply. *Do not send him your supplies*, but merely obtain from him the address of a missionary with a letter of introduction; then send the material yourself direct to the missionary.

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

H. Hofmann




# IMPROVED UNIFORM LESSONS FOR 1923.

## FIRST QUARTER.

JANUARY 7 — MARCH 25, 1923.
(SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE, BEGUN IN OCTOBER, 1922.)

### LESSON I (15).* — January 7.

### JESUS HEALING ON THE SABBATH. — Luke 13.

**PRINT vs. 10–17.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *It is lawful to do good on the sabbath day.* — MATT. 12 : 12.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 103 : 1–8.
**Reference Material** : Ex. 20 : 8–11 ; Isa. 35 ; 56 : 1–8 ; Mark 2 : 23 — 3 : 5.
**Primary Topic** : JESUS DOING GOOD.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 13 : 10–17.
**Memory Verse** : Jesus . . . went about doing good. Acts 10 : 38.
**Junior Topic** : JESUS HEALING A HELPLESS WOMAN.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 13 : 10–17.
**Memory Verses** : Ps. 103 : 2, 3.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : RIGHT USES OF THE LORD'S DAY.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : RIGHT USES OF THE LORD'S DAY.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** may begin another " time stick " like that which was suggested in last year's Notes, but covering only the last five months of Christ's life. Give each pupil a long and broad ruler, which a carpenter will make for you, on which you have pasted a strip of paper. Divide it into five parts, one for each month. Use the list of events given in the introduction of this book, and have the pupils add them, in the proper places, as they reach them in the course of the lessons. While teaching this week, as the main lesson, Christ's beautiful kindness to the suffering woman, do not forget to use it as an illustration of the spirit of helpfulness which should fill their Sabbaths, and spend some time in talking over with them the ways in which a Sabbath will be wisely used.

**The Older Classes** will study the entire chapter, bringing out the many applications to the Sabbath question. They may debate the Sabbath question, one pupil arguing for and another against the strict observance of the Sabbath, and the teacher pointing out the Christian way.

* The numbers in parentheses through this quarter give the continuation numbers of this course.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — In November or December, A.D. 29, the third year of Christ's public ministry.

**Place.** — Somewhere in Peræa, the country east of the Jordan.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Sabbath in the Old Testament.
The Sabbath throughout the New Testament.
A grouping and classification of Christ's miracles.
Christ's testimony to the existence of Satan.
The sayings of this chapter compared with similar sayings in Matthew and Mark.
What would Christ think of the way we observe the Sabbath to-day?

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: Right Uses of the Lord's Day.**

I. SABBATH TEACHING AND HEALING, vs. 1–13.

The Sabbath for warning (vs. 1–5).
The Sabbath for fruit-bearing (vs. 6–9).
The Sabbath for restoration (vs. 10–13).

II. SABBATH SERVICE, vs. 14–35.

Jesus and his critics (vs. 14–17).
Sabbath seed and leaven (vs. 18–21).
The Sabbath door (vs. 22–30).
The longing of the Saviour (vs. 31–35).
How Christ would have us observe his day.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

A powerful sermon in J. Wilbur Chapman's *And Judas Iscariot.* A very helpful chapter in Dean Brown's *The Master's Way.* Rev. Alfred Rowland, D.D., in *The Miracles of Jesus.* Works on the miracles by Spurgeon, George Macdonald, Howson, Hovey, Bruce, Laidlaw, Trench, etc. Alexander Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture.* Poem, "The Woman Whom Satan Had Bound," in George Macdonald's *A Hidden Life. Sunday the World's Rest Day* (report of the fourteenth International Lord's Day Congress). Floody's *Scientific Basis of Sabbath and Sunday.* Publications of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States and of the Lord's Day League of New England.

**I. SABBATH TEACHING AND HEALING**, vs. 1–13. In this chapter Luke reports a series of Christ's words and deeds from his final journey to Jerusalem, most of which was through Peræa, the country east of the Jordan. The account has especially sacred significance because our Lord's death was so near.

THE SABBATH FOR WARNING (vs. 1–5). The opening verses of the chapter tell how some men, probably Judæans, came to Jesus with the story of a massacre of Christ's own people, Galileans, whom the Roman soldiers had killed while they were offering sacrifices in the temple. Such murders in the holy precincts were common in Pilate's day, numbering at one Passover no fewer than twenty thousand. Some think that Barabbas was arrested at this time, and that the deed caused the quarrel between Pilate and Herod Antipas.

From an Underwood stereograph.
The Pool of Siloam.

The Judæans who told of the event evidently thought the massacre was a penalty deserved by the Galileans for their special sins, but Christ repudiated the idea, and turned the tables by reminding the Judæans how a tower had recently fallen on some of their own countrymen at the Pool of Siloam south of Jerusalem — probably some part of the aqueduct which Pilate built, paying for it out of the sacred treasury of the temple. "Were *they* sinners above others that they met that terrible fate?" Christ asked. Then he turned on the malicious gossips with the stern warning: "Except *ye* repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

It is not said that these words were spoken on the Sabbath; but, however that may be, the Sabbath is a day set apart for special thought of our sins, a day for repentance, a day of cleansing. That is not its only purpose, of course; it looks forward as well

10. And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath day.
11. And behold, a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up.
12. And when Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.
13. And he laid his hands upon her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

---

as backward; but we do not enter the sacred hours of the Sabbath wisely except with a sense of great need. We are impure and require its purifying. The Sabbath is a day of solemn warnings.

THE SABBATH FOR FRUIT-BEARING (vs. 6–9). This section of our chapter suggests another function of the Sabbath: it gives us the best opportunity for fruit-bearing our lives will find. Christ's parable of the fig-tree was based upon the facts that fig-trees were often planted in vineyards with the grapevines, and that a young tree only three years old would normally begin to bear fruit. Any tree, young or old, that had been three years without bearing fruit was therefore presumably barren, and should be cut down as worthless. Some see in this a reference to the three years of Christ's ministry, which had brought forth no appreciable fruit so far as the nation at large was concerned. However that may be, the little parable expresses Christ's earnest desire for fruit-bearing followers, Christians that not only know God's will but do it. One day in seven is not too much to set apart from our work for ourselves and apply to unselfish labors for others, and this is the fruit that the Vine-dresser seeks in our lives.

THE SABBATH FOR RESTORATION (vs. 10–13). "These verses present to us one of the most interesting stories imaginable." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.* 10. **And he was teaching in one of the synagogues.** "Any one in the congregation might be asked by the ruler to preach, or might ask the ruler for permission to preach." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* **On the sabbath day.** Our Lord went regularly to church on the Sabbath. There he could be nearest his Father to worship, and nearest his brother men to help. Christ's followers will do as he did.

11. **And behold, a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years.** "Eighteen years is a long time for those who are active, but to a woman who is sick the time seems endless. She could scarcely remember the day when she walked down street with the ease and grace of healthy womanhood." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.* And yet she went to church! "There were apparently two elements in the case: one physical, spinal curvature, or dorsal paralysis; the other nervous or mental — some infirmity which paralyzed the will." — *Prof. John Laidlaw, D.D.* "In this case we seem to be on the debatable borderland between ordinary diseases and the peculiar class denominated demoniacal." — *Prof. A. B. Bruce, D.D.* **And she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up.** "I have been told that this expression is the same word which is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews where Jesus is said to be able to save to the uttermost: so that really the Scriptures mean that she tried to the uttermost to lift herself up and failed, and that she had gone to the uttermost in the matter of bondage, and then because Jesus is able to save to the uttermost he set her free." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.*

12. **And when Jesus saw her, he called her.** Bent over, she was hidden in the crowd, but Jesus was probably standing on a platform to teach. "Jesus always occupies a place from which he can spy out those who are bowed down." — *C. H. Spurgeon.* **And said to her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.** "This word is remarkable as not being, like most of the cures of demoniacs, a command to the evil spirit to go forth, but an assurance to the sufferer, fitted to inspire her with hope, and to encourage her to throw off the alien tyranny." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

13. **And he laid his hands upon her.** It was not enough for our Lord to speak to her: he must show his loving sympathy by laying his hands on her. Thus his followers are to come into touch with the sinful and needy and sad.

*Illustration.* "It was considered a wonderful act of condescension on the part of King George III. to enter the tent of a dying gypsy woman in Windsor Forest, and talk to her on religious subjects. The story ran through the country like wildfire. But what was that to the condescension of Him who was coequal with the Eternal Father, yet stooped so low as to take upon him the form of a servant, and who put

14. And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, answered and said to the multitude,

himself into personal contact with those from whom many of us would shrink?" — *Rev. Alfred Rowland, D.D.*

**And immediately she was made straight.** "What an uplifting! — a type of all that God works in his human beings. The head, down-bent with sin, care, sorrow, pain, is uplifted; the grovelling will sends its gaze heavenward." — *George Macdonald.*

*Illustration.* "Some years ago there came into the McAuley mission in New York City a man who was, because of his sin, unable to speak and was bound down until, instead of standing a man six feet high, as he should have done, he was like a dwarf. He came to Christ in the old mission, and when, kneeling at the altar, he accepted him, as if by a miracle Jesus set him free also, and when he stood up the bands were snapped that held him, and he had his old stature back again. His speech, however, was not entirely recovered. It is the custom in the mission for one to observe his anniversary each year and to give a testimony; whenever the anniversary of this man occurred he always had another read his lesson, then he would stand before the people bowed down as he had been in sin and suddenly rise before them in the full dignity of his Christian manhood, glorifying God in his standing." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.*

"The pent life rushes swift along
Channels it used to know;
And up, amidst the wondering throng,
She rises firm and slow.

"I think thou, Lord, wilt heal me too,
Whate'er the needful cure;
The great best only thou wilt do,
And hoping I endure." — *George Macdonald.*

Christ in a Synagogue Curing the Woman with an Infirmity.

**And glorified God.** "That poor woman was being prepared, even by the agency of the devil, to glorify God. Nobody in the synagogue could glorify God as she could when she was at last set free. Every year out of the eighteen gave emphasis to the utterance of her thanksgiving. The deeper her sorrow the sweeter her song." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

This miracle suggests the great restoring work of the Sabbath. The Sabbath finds us bent to the earth with a weight of toil, of worry, of sorrow, and it gives us a chance to straighten up again, to rest from our labors, to throw off our anxieties and get into our hearts the peace and joy that Christ alone can give. Careful measurement of our physical energies proves that the night's rest of each of the six work-days restores only about five-sixths of the waste of the day before, so that on Saturday night we are six-sixths in arrear. A restful Sunday precisely brings up the balance, and sends us into the week physically "as good as new." If we could apply laboratory tests to our spiritual powers we should find the same rule of Sabbath recuperation applying there. The Sabbath is an essential Day of Restoration.

II. **SABBATH SERVICE,** vs. 14–17. 14. **And the ruler of the synagogue.**

There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath.

15. But the Lord answered him, and said, Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16. And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, *these* eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath?

---

"This official was the chief of the elders who formed the local Sanhedrin. Though only first among his equals, the virtual rule of the synagogue devolved upon him. He would have the superintendence of the service, and would determine in each case who was to be called upon to read, to conduct the prayers, or to deliver an address." — *Prof. John Laidlaw, D.D.* **Being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the sabbath.** "There are eyes in which ritual is more beautiful than mercy. There are noses, keen and sharp, to which burnt offerings are more fragrant than deeds of love." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.* **Answered and said to the multitude.** He was not angry with the congregation but with Jesus. Not daring to rebuke him directly, he chides him over their heads. **There are six days in which men ought to work.** This synagogue ruler pretends not only that the people had come to church in order to be healed, but also that Jesus was working when he healed the woman with a word and a touch! Both charges were palpably absurd. **In them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath.** "Seven of Christ's detailed miracles were done on the Sabbath, besides, probably, others described in general terms. His Sabbath cures wounded the leaders of his nation in their tenderest sensibilities, as keepers and expounders of the law, and brought them to the brink of his murder. But to distinguish the Sabbath as he did by working upon it so many of his miracles was to consecrate it to the purposes of his gospel and to baptize it into the spirit of his kingdom." — *Prof. John Laidlaw, D.D.*

15. **But the Lord answered him.** "Mark the severity, which is loving severity, of Christ's answer." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **And said, Ye hypocrites.** The plural shows that the ruler of the synagogue had been joined by others in his complaints. They were hypocrites because they pretended a zeal for the Sabbath, but were very ready to work on the Sabbath in their own interests. Their real motive was jealousy of him and of his influence over the people. **Doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall.** "And these animals have not been tied up for more than a few hours; while I, in your thoughts, may not unloose from the thraldom of Satan this captive of eighteen years." — *Trench.* **And lead him away to watering?** This was real labor, though necessary, and Christ did not object to it in the least; but in healing the woman he had performed no labor, yet they objected to it.

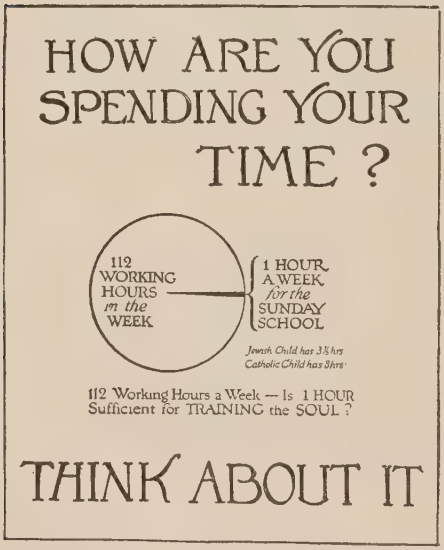
*Illustration.* "The Talmud has minute rules for leading out animals on the Sabbath: An ass may go out with his pack saddle if it was tied on before the Sabbath, but not with a bell or yoke; a camel may go out with a halter, but not with a rag tied to his tail; a string of camels may be led if the driver takes all the halters in his hand, and does not twist them, but they must not be tied to one another — and so on for pages." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

16. **And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham.** A Jew, with whose sorrows the Jewish leaders should have had sympathy; a Jew — and not a beast! **Whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years.** This may imply that Jesus traced her infirmity to her sin; "and therefore she was like many children of God whom we know. What it is that binds them we cannot always tell. With this person it is fashion, and with that it is earnings; with another it is pride, and still another selfishness; with this one it is the encouragement of some passion, and with still another it is the practice of some secret sin. Many of us are sadly crippled in our influence because of these things, for this woman was just as truly bound as if she had been in chains." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.* Our Lord, however, does not speak of the woman's sin, but calls her "a daughter of Abraham"; and great sinners do not frequent the house of God. Satan "may therefore be said to have bound this daughter of faith in some such sense as that in which he is said to have inflicted boils on Job, or in which St. Paul describes his 'stake in the flesh' as a messenger of Satan

17. And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

sent to buffet him. — *Prof. John Laidlaw, D.D.* **To have been loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath?** "What is the day for but for loosing? The factory hand is 'loosed' from his machine, the mind is 'loosed' from the shallow puddles of interest, the whole workaday world is 'loosed' from the pressing necessity of making a living that it may take thought concerning the vaster interest of making a life." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

17. **And as he said these things.** He must have spoken with a kindliness and large benignancy that contrasted gloriously with their pettiness and harshness. **All his adversaries were put to shame.** The plural here is further evidence that the ruler of the synagogue was not alone in his reproof. **And all the multitude rejoiced.** In part, for the liberating teachings of our Lord. "The lesson taught here is that Christianity is a very merciful, a very compassionate, a very humane religion, and that the Sabbath is an invitation to humanity and an opportunity for its exercise." — *Dean Howson.* **For all the glorious things that were done by him.** This account "bears every mark of historical truth, and we know of no principles on which its credibility can be denied, without denying the very existence of Jesus himself." — *Prof. Alvah Hovey, D.D.* And it is involved with all the other wonderful deeds which Jesus performed, deeds of which it reminded that congregation.


HOW ARE YOU SPENDING YOUR TIME ?
112 WORKING HOURS in the WEEK
1 HOUR A WEEK for the SUNDAY SCHOOL
Jewish Child has 3½ hrs
Catholic Child has 5hrs
112 Working Hours a Week — Is 1 HOUR Sufficient for TRAINING the SOUL ?
THINK ABOUT IT

SABBATH SEED AND LEAVEN (vs. 18–21). Christ followed the miracle (note the "therefore" of verse 18) with two little parables picturing the growth of the kingdom of God. It is rapid and surprising growth, as the tiny mustard seed shoots up into a plant as tall as a horse and its rider, its branches thronged with finches and other small birds seeking its seed. It is also a pervasive and multiplying growth, as a small portion of yeast spreads through a large mass of dough and lightens it.

Such is the Sabbath in a life: its influence is felt through all the days of the week, and in all the business of those days. The truths taught on the Sabbath grow enormously, becoming the mainstay of a nation. An individual that disregards the Sabbath is soon dwarfed; he is out of touch with the life principle, the principle of growth. A people that disregards the Sabbath is sure to degenerate. Seven days of work do not produce prosperity or add to the nation's wealth. Six days' work and one day of rest and worship cause the land to grow and the people to prosper.

THE SABBATH DOOR (vs. 22–30). On another occasion, Luke records, our Lord spoke still another little parable, in answer to the foolish question whether the number to be saved in his kingdom would be few or many. "Do not worry over such questions," the Saviour answers in effect, "but look to yourselves, that you may be saved. It is a narrow door, that of salvation, and many shall fail to enter it because they approach it too late, or do not try hard enough to enter it, or seek some different door. I am the one Door."

All of this has its bearing on the Sabbath. It is a narrow door, this Sabbath entrance to the week. It calls for a measure of sacrifice, of self-restraint. But it is Christ's door, the only entrance to a happy and successful week. Enter it in the fear and love of God, and you will find yourself, once the narrow entrance is passed,

in a large room, a place of many blessings and of wide opportunities. There is nothing narrow or restricted about Sabbath results!

THE LONGING OF THE SAVIOUR (vs. 31–35). The final saying of this glorious chapter, like the first one, was spoken by Christ in answer to an impudent and false speech, made in this case by some Pharisees who threatened Christ with the murderous wrath of Herod Antipas, in whose territory Peræa was. Using the only term of contempt he ever uttered, our Lord called the murderer of John the Baptist "that fox," and said that he would take his time in travelling through Peræa, well knowing that he must die in Jerusalem. Then the Redeemer uttered that cry of a breaking heart (vs. 34, 35) over the Jerusalem so dear to him, the Holy City that had been so cruel to the prophets and was soon to complete its sinfulness by slaying the greatest Prophet of all. The brooding love of Christ, so wonderfully expressed in these words, is over all his followers, and rests in benediction upon his church and his day. "And ye would not!" — those sad words apply to all that desert the Lord's house and scorn his Sabbaths.

The Biggest Step in Any Man's Life.

HOW CHRIST WOULD HAVE US OBSERVE HIS DAY. "Be careful of your example. Show by your conduct that you love and prize the Sabbath. Make it different from all the other days. Adorn it. Make it the jewel of the week. Read on the Sabbath only the best books. Think only the highest thoughts. Nourish only the noblest feelings. Let it be a day without a thorn. Release yourself from toil, and also from downward-looking thoughts and worry. Say to yourself and to others, 'This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.'" — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

Those who, like the sick woman whom Christ healed, go to church under great difficulties, are sure to reap rich and unexpected rewards from their church-going.

"Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord, who rises
With healing in his wings.
When comforts are declining
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining
To cheer it after rain." — *William Cowper.*

"I have seen it stated that two million people in England are obliged to labor seven days out of every week. A committee reported that 300,000 men in Greater New York never have a day of rest. So long as there is in the world one human being who is deprived of his weekly day of rest, there is a wrong to be righted and a tragedy to be brought to an end." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

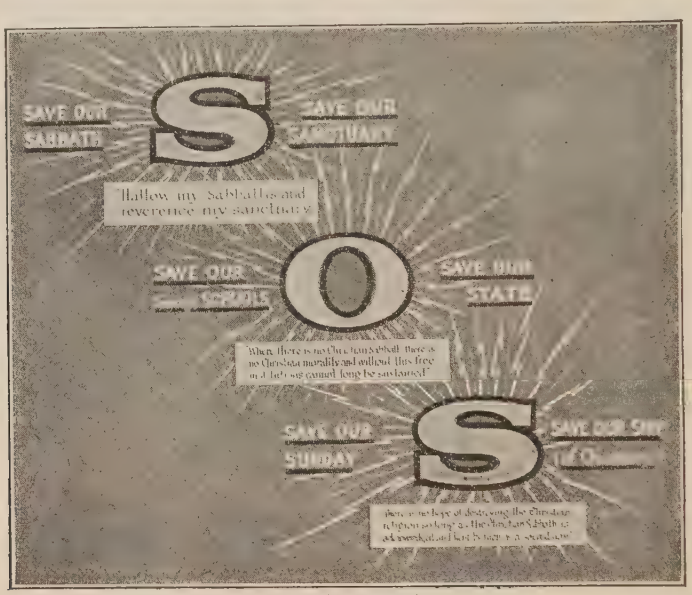
*Illustration.* "The men who crossed the plains to California after the discovery of gold in 1849 found that the observance of one rest day in seven was expedient as well as godly. The men who rested their ox teams and their horses on Sunday reached the Golden Gate ahead of those who had driven straight through without a break, and their animals were in much better condition for the steadily recurring truce of God. There is good reason for believing that students who set apart the Sabbath for interests and activities more directly spiritual will likewise make a steadier advance toward the golden key of Phi Beta Kappa." — *Dean Charles R. Brown, of Yale.*

"Until the advocates of Sunday sports can prove unmistakably that such sports, substituting physical for spiritual activity, will ennoble and strengthen private life and public morals as beyond question the 'New England Sabbath' has done, every friend of mankind and every lover of God may and must oppose Sunday sports." — *Rev. Harry Adams Hersey.*

"The intense pressure of modern living and the electric methods of business competition demand, as never before, a weekly rest day." — *Rev. Martin D. Kneeland, D.D.*

"The Sabbath was made for man," and necessary work for others is always in place on the Lord's day.

*Illustration.* The night after the terrible San Francisco earthquake twenty-six babies were born in the parks, all the outfits which their mothers had prepared having been burned up. To provide for this pressing need the women of Dr. Charles R. Brown's church spent all day Sunday running sewing-machines in the church prayer-meeting room, and surely they pleased Christ by so doing.




S. O. S. Wireless Call.

From a circular issued by the Lord's Day Alliance of the U. S., New York City.

"Men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality." — *From Washington's order for Sunday rest in the Army and Navy; similar orders were issued by Presidents Lincoln, Jackson, Harrison, and Wilson.*

"As we keep or break the Sabbath day, we nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope by which man rises." — *Abraham Lincoln.*

"All who work with hand or brain require the rest which a general observance of the Sabbath only can secure. Those who do not find the Divine command in the Book cannot fail to find it in the man." — *Benjamin Harrison.*

"I am in favor of Sunday legislation and a strict observance of the Christian Sabbath." — *William McKinley.*

"Experience shows that a day of rest is essential to mankind; that it is demanded by civilization as well as by Christianity." — *Theodore Roosevelt.*

"The longer I live the more highly do I esteem the proper observance of the Christian Sabbath, and the more grateful do I feel toward those who impress its importance on the community." — *Daniel Webster.*

"Sundays the pillars are
On which heaven's palace archèd lies;
The other days fill up the spare
And hollow room with vanities:
They are the fruitful beds and borders
In God's rich garden; that is bare
Which parts their ranks and orders." — *George Herbert.*

## LESSON II (16). — January 14.

## JESUS TEACHING HUMILITY. — Luke 14.

**PRINT vs. 7–14.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* — 1 PET. 5 : 5.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 15.
**Reference Material** : John 13 : 1–17 ; Phil. 2 : 5–11.
**Primary Topic**: THE STORY OF A GREAT DINNER.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 14 : 7–14.
**Memory Verse** : Little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue ; but in deed and truth. 1 John 3 : 18.
**Junior Topic** : JESUS TEACHING COURTESY.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 14 : 7–14.
**Memory Verse** : 1 Pet. 5 : 5.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : " OTHERS."
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes**, if they have not done so already, will be interested in making from pasteboard or wood a set of miniature tables and couches such as are described below, showing how the guests were arranged at a dinner and what the " chief places " were. These may be made during the week by the pupils and brought to the class on Sunday. The teacher may prepare a set of questions on the lesson, written on strips of cardboard which will be placed on the tables, taken up in order by the pupils, and answered. The pupils will retain the questions they answer, and have a little contest to see who will get the largest number of cardboard strips.

**The Older Classes** will study the vitally important question of Christian service, basing the study on our chapter. A good plan will be to appoint three leaders, each with one of the sections of the chapter as treated below, and also with one division of the class. Each leader, using the class members assigned to him, will present his aspect of the subject in as fresh and practical a way as he can devise, each division striving to make the most interesting and helpful presentation.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — January, A.D. 30, at the beginning of the last three months before the crucifixion.

**Place.** — Somewhere in Peræa, the country east of the Jordan.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Social customs of the ancient Jews relating to dinners.
Christ's Sabbath cures.
" Chief seats " and the corresponding evils of to-day.
Non-narrative parables in Christ's teaching.
Christ's teachings concerning the poor.
The conditions of Christian discipleship.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Spirit of Christian Service.**

I. THE SPIRIT OF HUMILITY, vs. 1–11.
Another Sabbath healing.
The chief seats.
Humility and service.

II. THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE, vs. 12–24.
Service without recompense.
The parable of the great supper.
The manner of service that pleases Christ.

III. THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE, vs. 25–35.
Hating one's life.
Bearing one's cross.
Counting the cost.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Broughton's *Table Talks of Jesus*. Snowden's *Scenes and Sayings in the Life of Christ. Christ's Table Talk*, by Bishop Hendrix. Trench's *Brief Thoughts and Meditations*. Moinet's *The Great Alternative*. Cox's *Expositions*, Vol. 2. Service's *Sermons*. Hamilton's *The People's Church Pulpit*. Baring-Gould in *Plain Preaching*, Vol. 2. Maurice's *Sermons Preached in Country Churches*. Toll in *Sermons on the Gospels. Humility, the Beauty of Holiness*, a most helpful book by Andrew Murray. Marcus Dods's *The Parables: St. Luke*.

**I. THE SPIRIT OF HUMILITY**, vs. 1–11. ANOTHER SABBATH HEALING. Last Sunday we studied Christ's act in healing on the Sabbath in the synagogue a woman who had been sick eighteen years, a deed of mercy which aroused the bitter criticism of the bigoted ruler of the synagogue and his friends. Luke now follows that account with a similar event, the healing on the Sabbath of a man with that unsightly disease, then regarded as incurable, the dropsy. The occasion was a Sabbath

7. And he spake a parable unto those that were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief seats; saying unto them,

feast in the house of a Pharisee, one of those elaborate entertainments with which the Jews celebrated their rest day, the food being all cooked the day before. The purpose of the invitation was to get some handle against Jesus, and to that end this dropsical man was placed among the curious crowd which, uninvited, was allowed in the East to press in from the street at such times. Christ's enemies knew that he would not resist this appeal for healing, that he might fail in such a difficult case, and that if he succeeded there would be another charge against him to make before the synagogue or the Sanhedrin.

Christ's sharp question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" foiled this crafty plot. If they answered "No," he would refute them with instances of Sabbath deeds of mercy taken from the Scriptures. If they said "Yes," they would give their case away. Therefore they said nothing, but merely glowered at him angrily and helplessly, while he healed the sufferer and sent him away rejoicing.

Thus this chapter, which has for its keynote the thought of service, opens with a conspicuous example of Christian helpfulness. We, Christ's followers, are to relieve others of all their distress as far as we can, restoring them in body, mind, and spirit to the strength, the peace, and the purity which Christ longs to give them. We shall be met with opposition, very likely. We shall be criticised and misrepresented. But shall we not rejoice thus to share in the experiences of our Saviour?

THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER. At this same feast in the Pharisee's house our Lord spoke one of his most striking parables, that of the Refused Banquet. The occasion was a complacent remark made by one of the guests, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" The speaker had no doubt that he, with all other orthodox Jews, would sit down at the heavenly tables. But Christ turned on him with this heart-searching story of the great supper. The invitations had been sent out in advance, and these correspond with the earnest messages of the ancient prophets. But, according to the custom in those lands without time-pieces, when the feast was ready servants were sent out to tell the guests that it was time for them to come. These messengers were John the Baptist and Christ and his apostles. Then the surprising thing happened: "they all began to make excuse," and their excuses were most trivial — just such empty and insulting objections as the scribes and Pharisees were constantly making to Christ's loving invitations. No wonder the angry master of the house sent out into "the streets and lanes of the city" and then into "the highways and hedges," and filled up his banqueting tables with "the poor and maimed and blind and lame."

That is just what Christ was doing when on earth — preaching his gospel to the poor and the sick, to prisoners and outcasts, and filling his Kingdom with the despised and the neglected. Ever since that time the Christian church, though it has won the learned and rich and powerful, and though the greatest nations on earth are now Christian, still gains its initial triumphs on all mission fields among men of the lowest ranks in life. Our service as Christians is primarily to the most needy, to strangers, to aliens, to the poor and weak and sorrowful and scorned. Individuals and churches whose attention is paid mainly to the rich and powerful are missing the spirit of Christian service.

THE MANNER OF SERVICE THAT PLEASES CHRIST. It makes no difference how expert our service is, how apparently effective, how distinguished and popular, if it is not approved by Christ. The first rule in every Christian's manual of work is this: "Find out Christ's will in the matter."

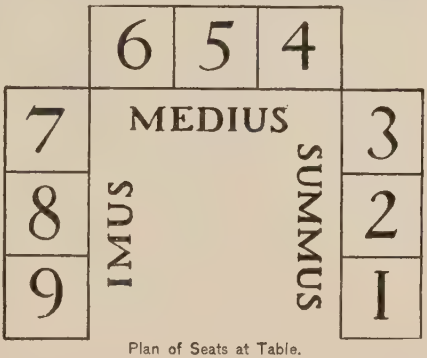
Whatever we do for Christ, he wishes us to do it (1) heartily, (2) promptly, (3) prayerfully, (4) persistently, (5) humbly, (6) confidently. If we observe the other five conditions, we cannot fail of confidence. We may not succeed in doing what we set out to do, but we shall succeed in our main attempt, which is to please Christ.

When the dropsical man was healed, the bystanders objected to the time; and when the invitations to the great supper were sent out, those invited had their own preferred occupations. The Christian will hold both time and task in strict subservience to the will of Christ. Whenever he calls, and to whatever he calls, the Christian will leap in swift and glad obedience.

THE CHIEF SEATS. 7. **And he spake a parable unto those that were bidden.** A parable is "a method of speech in which moral or religious truth is illustrated from the analogy of common experiences." — *Davis's Bible Dictionary.* A parable need

8. When thou art bidden of any man to a marriage feast, sit not down in the chief seat; lest haply a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him,

not be a story, and is not in the following teachings. **When he marked how they chose out the chief seats.** "These at each of the various *triclinia* would be those numbered 2, 5, and 8. The host usually sat at 9." — *Cambridge Bible.* Some think that "our Lord's language points to the position of the couches themselves, some being higher than others, as nearer the chief personages, or actually on a dias." — *New Century Bible.* "The conceit and presumption of the Pharisees and scribes on matters of etiquette were intolerable. They were punctilious and imperious on points of their own preferment, and with shameless effrontery would push themselves into the foremost place. We are told that 'at a banquet of King Jannæus, the rabbi, Simeon ben Shetach, in spite of the presence of some great Persian satraps, had thrust himself at table between the king and queen, and when rebuked for his intrusion quoted, in his defence (Ecclus. 15 : 5) : "Exalt wisdom, and she shall make thee sit among princes."'" — *Rev. James H. Snowden, D.D.* "With great propriety, having cured the dropsy of the body, does he proceed to cure the spiritual dropsy, the swelling of pride." — *Grotius.*



Plan of Seats at Table.

8. **When thou art bidden of any man to a marriage feast.** Christ takes it for granted that his followers will join in social intercourse and not withdraw from the world in ascetic solitude. Only, "let us ask ourselves one or two questions. Do our social engagements contribute to the strength of our Christian character? Do

Oriental Mode of Reclining at Table.

they tend to make us more active and earnest in the serious business before us, as all recreation should? Or, do they leave behind the exhaustion and weariness that succeed excitement?" — *Rev. Charles Moinet.* Christ does not seem to have been attending a wedding feast, so that his connection of his precept with such a feast was tactful, removing the rebuke a little from the immediate occasion. **Sit not down in the chief seat.** "The discourtesy that leads one to be forward and rude in seizing a coveted seat at a table or on a railway train is a leaf of that poisonous root of evil that caused the Son of God to come into the world and be crucified on the cross." — *Rev. James H. Snowden, D.D.* "Christianity is the best foundation of what we call good manners; and of two persons who have equal knowledge of the world, he that is the best Christian will be the best gentleman." — *William Jones.* **Lest haply a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him.** Not necessarily a better man,

9. And he that bade thee and him shall come and say to thee, Give this man place; and then thou shalt begin with shame to take the lowest place.

10. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest place; that when he that hath bidden thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all that sit at meat with thee.

11. For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

---

but a man of higher station in life. The Christian, however, observes Paul's rule, "In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself" (Phil. 2 : 3).

9. **And he that bade thee and him shall come and say to thee.** "The guests are supposed to have taken their places before the host comes in." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Give this man place.** "Make room for him," is Professor Moffatt's translation. **And then thou shalt begin with shame to take the lowest place.** "*Begin* emphasizes the shame of the reluctant movement toward the lower place. *The lowest*, since the other, intervening places are all assigned." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.*

10. **But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest place.** "Sit down" is literally, "lay yourself back." We must remember that they did not sit in chairs, but reclined on couches at low tables, resting on their left elbows.

*Illustration.* "Perhaps Christ's advice to guests that they should modestly take the lowest place is rendered less needful in our own society, in which any obtrusive assumption of precedence would be considered a breach of good manners. And yet there are still extant characters which by kindred vices become the bane of all genial and sociable intercourse. There is the man who uses every dinner-table as an occasion for the exhibition of his own wit or knowledge or powers of conversation. There is the man who is uncomfortable and unhappy all the evening if he does not meet with full recognition of his importance. There is the woman who is offended if you ask her to sit at the same table with those whom she considers much her inferiors in station. There is the person who is always thinking of what is due by others to himself, never or rarely of what is due by him to others." — *Marcus Dods.*

**That when he that hath bidden thee cometh.** "Not indeed that the lowest place is to be taken with the very object of courting promotion. Jesus means that this will be the consequence. It is a common Hebrew idiom to speak of a result in language that seems to indicate a purpose." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.* **He may say to thee, Friend, go up higher.** Christ is evidently quoting from Prov. 25 : 6, 7. This is what Christ delights to say to all his followers, inviting them to places of greater responsibility and honor. But sometimes, alas! in our sloth and fear, the gracious invitation is refused. "Is it not an argument for angels' tears when one meant for grander things acquiesces in meaner, when one who might have stood on a highest step of the throne, in the inner circle of light, accepts a place in the dimmer and remoter circumference?" — *Trench.* **Then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all that sit at meat with thee.** "The humble man never falls; for whence should he fall who is already below all? Self-elevation is a great abasement; but self-abasement is a great exaltation, and honor, and dignity." — *Macarius.*

"Humble we must be if to heaven we go;
High is the roof there but the door is low."

11. **For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled.** "God humbles us when we are exalted in our own conceit, just that he may exalt us when he has humbled us." — *F. D. Maurice.* **And he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.** The same lesson is taught in Prov. 15 : 33; 16 : 18, 19; 29 : 23; and Peter, who was doubtless listening, remembered the lesson, 1 Pet. 5 : 5. "In Christ's kingdom 'Go down lower' may mean 'Come up higher.' Is he not asking you to a higher place and task every time he asks you to bear the cross he bore, and to fill up the remnant of his affliction?" — *Samuel Cox.* "If you thirst after humility, do not shrink from humiliation, which is the way to it. For if you cannot stoop to humiliation, you will never be able to rise to humility." — *St. Bernard.*

HUMILITY AND SERVICE. "What is the real lesson in this teaching? It is not simply a lecture on good manners, though such a lecture would not have been out of place. The real lesson is the same as in the healing of the man with the dropsy.

12. And he said to him also that had bidden him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

---

It is the obligation strength owes to weakness. The man first at the feast has an advantage, but it is not Christian to take it." — *Rev. Len G. Broughton, D.D.*

Humility gives us the best chance to serve the world. "The world meets us in very much the same spirit that we take to it. If we push men out of our way, they push back; if we plot and strive against them, they strive and plot against us: whereas if we show ourselves friendly, they are not unwilling to be our friends; if we are unaffectedly meek and pure, they honor us for virtues which they may not themselves possess." — *Samuel Cox.*

*Illustration.* "A plain man invented a word to explain why a minister of marked ability and very courtly manners could not influence the people. When asked what the difficulty was, he replies, 'The only difficulty seems to be, there is no *mutuality* about him.'" — *J. M. Buckley.*

"What is one of the first and distinguishing features of true conversion? It is invariably a deep sense of self-humiliation." — *S. Baring-Gould.*

"Let us remember that humility cannot be attained without seeking and striving for. It can, however, be had by us all for the asking and working. Seek God's preventing grace to remove from you all self-exaltation and pride. This being done away, ask his co-operating grace that you may put on all lowliness and meekness." — *Rev. William E. Toll.*

"The Christian prays for humility, at times very earnestly; but in his secret heart he prays more, if not in word, then in wish, to be kept from the very things that will make him humble. He is not yet so in love with humility as the beauty of the Lamb of God, and the joy of heaven, that he would sell all to procure it." — *Andrew Murray.*

"The acquirement of humility is very difficult; and, like all things hard to be obtained, when once possessed is most precious and abiding. It is, moreover, so entirely contrary to the natural man that it may be considered distinctly a Christian virtue, one of those marks of our discipleship which make men take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus." — *Rev. William E. Toll.*

II. **THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE**, vs. 12–24. 12. **And he said to him also that had bidden him.** For why should the guests alone receive the benefit of Christ's wisdom, and the host be excluded? **When thou makest a dinner or a supper.** The word translated "dinner" (*ariston*) was "not the principal meal of the day, but a noon-breakfast, luncheon." The "supper" (*deipnon*) was "the principal meal at evening, corresponding to the modern late dinner." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* "The Jews were in the habit of making these Sabbath feasts costly affairs in which the main motives were the vanity of display and the effort to score a social triumph." — *Rev. James H. Snowden, D.D.* **Call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors.** Jesus, of course, does not forbid social kindnesses and interchanges among relatives, friends, and neighbors; only, we are not to confine our courtesies to these. Rather than do that, we should not invite them at all. "Christ's teaching is that a man should not spend his life among his supposed equals, giving and receiving, but that he should maintain a living sympathy with men as men, and should know the blessedness of giving without the hope of an earthly reward; that he should not be constantly asking, Can I make anything out of this? or, How will I get back the cost of this?" — *J. M. Buckley.* **Lest haply they also bid**

A Group of Lepers by the Wayside.

13. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14. And thou shalt be blessed; because they have not *wherewith* to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.

---

**thee again.** "Lest haply" implies half humorously that this would be a danger to be feared rather than a result to be sought. Plato, in his *Phædrus*, expresses the same thought: "When you make a feast, invite not your friend, but the beggar and the empty soul, for they will love you, and attend you, and come about your doors, and will be the best pleased, and the most grateful, and will invoke blessings on your head." **And a recompense be made thee.** "Our Lord, that is to say, complains of what society itself is continually complaining of, that so much time, means, thought, and energy are spent on the giving and returning of formal civilities which every one knows to be hollow." — *Marcus Dods.* "In a similar case Martial says, 'You are asking for gifts, Sextus, not for friends.'" — *F. W. Farrar.*

13. **But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor.** Compare Matt. 25 : 35; Neh. 8 : 10. The essence of Christ's teaching here is this, that we are not to use our money for selfish gratification, but for the good of others. The fact that the money is honestly ours gives us no right to spend it as we please, unless we please to spend it in ways that will be helpful to society as a whole as well as to ourselves. For it is the social organization, under God, that has enabled us to earn our money and keep it safely.

*Illustration.* "A London clergyman showed how much had been accomplished by the County Council in removing crowded and filthy tenements and replacing them with sanitary dwellings, creating parks, and correcting various social evils, and when asked what it had all cost, answered, 'Just the price of one Lord Mayor's banquet.'" — *Rev. James H. Snowden, D.D.*

"The truth with regard to those classes for whose benefit our charitable institutions are maintained is not so much that they are degraded as that they have not yet had a chance to rise." — *Rev. John Service, D.D.*

**The maimed, the lame, the blind.** Beggars swarm in the streets of Eastern cities, claiming pity and help on account of all sorts of repulsive diseases and the very common blindness caused by the great heat, and dazzling light, the omnipresent dust, and the lack of sanitation. "Is not that the death of hospitality which limits one's views of life simply to this world and to the advantages of a purely personal sort, not trusting God to recompense for hospitality extended to the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind?" — *Bishop E. R. Hendrix.*

14. **And thou shalt be blessed.** The word translated "blessed" "here and always denotes rare virtue and felicity." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Because they have not wherewith to recompense thee.** How much more fortunate is a man who is rewarded by a king than by the king's subject, and happiest of all when he is rewarded by the King of kings! We might well pray to be barred from all other reward, this being our recompense. **For thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.** Compare 1 Tim. 6 : 17–19; Acts 24 : 15. "But this is not to be the chief, still less the only, motive of the kindness. For then it would cease to be kindness, and become a species of exchange in which something were given in consideration of something else to be received." — *Rev. Charles Moinet.* Our kindnesses will win for us God's approval in the great day of awards only when they are done solely for the sake of love — love to God and love to God's children on the earth. "There is no place where we may so safely lay up our treasures as in the hands of the poor." — *St. Chrysostom.*

III. **THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE**, vs. 25–35. HATING ONE'S LIFE. The spirit of sacrifice is involved in the spirit of service, no less than the spirit of humility. Humility places us alongside the lowest need, while sacrifice keeps us there until the need is met.

The first sacrifice demanded by Christian service, in Christ's day and in all the early Christian centuries, and in our time to some extent, is the sacrifice of personal relations. Many a convert in mission lands to-day, and in our home land as well, is compelled to "hate" his father and mother, wife and children, sisters and brothers; that is, though of course his affection for them is as deep as ever, he must not allow it to keep him from following Christ any more than if it did not exist. Often this single-hearted allegiance to the Saviour, in spite of the opposition of one's nearest

and dearest, wins the loved ones in the end ; but whether they are won or not, the sacrifice must be made. It is part of the service which we gladly render to Jesus Christ.

The same spirit of sacrifice must be extended to include the hatred of one's own life, that is, the absolute surrender of whatever in his personality, his plans, ambitions, abilities, and enjoyments, hinders his obedience to Christ. The spirit of sacrifice enters the very soul of the Christian, and not until it has done so can he render the highest and most fruitful service. This is the sacrificial service rendered by our Lord, and no finer type of service can be imagined. " We must so live in this world as if our spirit were in heaven and our body in the grave." — *St. Francis de Sales.*

BEARING ONE'S CROSS. In a pathetic, heroic sentence that has stirred the pulses of all Christians ever since, our Lord laid down the conditions of Christian service in terms of his own supreme service. " *Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*" The idea is founded on the custom of the condemned criminal carrying his own cross to the place of execution. It means therefore to be ready to die as a martyr ; and if this, then of course it includes all lesser sacrifices involved in following Christ." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.* Those that listened to Christ could not have understood his sad reference to his own death, so near at hand ; but the literal cross-bearing was familiar enough to their minds so that the metaphor would be clear and vivid. All servants of God must be prepared to go to the limit. The Christian soldier who says, " I'll obey, but only if I am not sent over the top," must be dismissed from the army in disgrace.

COUNTING THE COST. Jesus knew that hasty and ill-considered following is unsteady and brief following. He wants us to undertake the Christian life with our eyes open and our minds carefully made up. The two little parables of the unfinished tower and the hasty campaign may have sprung from the affairs of the times. The Herods were fond of building, and doubtless they were imitated by many whose means did not enable them to complete their projects. Also, Herod Antipas was embroiled with Hareth, king of Arabia, the father of Herod's first wife whom he had so basely wronged, — a warfare which resulted, though after this time, in Herod's deserved defeat. However this may be, the teaching of the parables is plain : Enter the Christian life intelligently, weigh the cost, understand what you must give up ; do not be a " rice Christian," following Christ " for what there is in it," but just because you love your Saviour and wish to do his will in the service of mankind. For the cost, though you pay to the utmost, is absolutely nothing compared with the glorious and eternal rewards.

## LESSON III (17). — January 21.

## THE PRODIGAL SON. — Luke 15.

(MAY BE USED WITH TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS.)

**PRINT vs. 11-24.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* — LUKE 15 : 10.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 143 : 1-8.
**Reference Material** : Ps. 32 ; Luke 7 : 36-50 ; Rom. 5 : 1-11 ; Gal. 6 : 1-5 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 15, 16.
**Primary Topic** : A FATHER'S LOVE.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 15 : 11-24.
**Memory Verse** : God is love. 1 John 4 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : A PICTURE OF THE HEAVENLY FATHER'S LOVE.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 15 : 11-24.
**Memory Verses** : Isa. 55 : 6, 7.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : THE REACH AND POWER OF OUR FATHER'S LOVE.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : HOW TO TREAT SINNERS.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS

**The Primary and Junior Classes** will enjoy a lesson simply illustrated in the following way. Give five squares of paper to each pupil, and provide the class with colored pencils, which may be passed around as needed. Draw before-

hand on each piece of paper a neat square, which is to be the frame of a picture. The teacher will work on a blackboard or on large sheets of paper in view of the class. Draw the story in five scenes, each in its square : the division of the inheritance, the good-by, the revelry in the far country, the swine-feeding, the return and welcome. Use straight marks for the persons, swine, beanpods, etc., only varying size, color, and position. The elder brother will be green, the father blue, the prodigal will start out a bright red and will be black as a swineherd and on his return, but you will place red over it. The swine will be horizontal strokes of black and the beanpods tiny strokes of green. You will be surprised to see how interested the children will be in the simple "drawing." Trust their imagination.

**To the Intermediate and Senior Classes** you may tell the story as if the two sons lived in your town and the prodigal went off to the nearest large city. Picture modern revels and show how wasteful and harmful they are. Make it clear to the pupils that they can be in "the far country" without leaving home.

**The Older Classes** will make this familiar story the occasion for a frank and full discussion of personal evangelism and their duty with regard to it. Talk about different kinds of persons in your town whom the class may influence and bring to Christ. Form an actual personal workers' band to do this and report results (without mentioning names) at each meeting of the class. Have a little prayer meeting over the plan.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — January, A.D. 30, three months before Christ's crucifixion.

**Place.** — Somewhere in Peræa, the region east of the Jordan.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

A comparison of the three parables of this chapter.
Bible similes for sin.
The "far countries" of Christ's day and of our day.
Christ's teaching about his Father's love for men.
How prodigals may be prevented.
How prodigals may be won back.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Our Heavenly Father's Love.**

I. THE FATHER SEEKING THE LOST, vs. 1–10.
- The parable of the lost sheep.
- The parable of the lost coin.
- The seeking love of God.

II. THE WANDERING SON RETURNING TO HIS FATHER, vs. 11–24.
- The restless boy.
- The far country.
- Coming to himself.

III. THE UNKIND ELDER BROTHER, vs. 25–32.
- "Thou never gavest me a kid."
- "All that is mine is thine."
- Every Christian an evangelist.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin have been illustrated by few artists, among them Domenico Feti (Dresden and Florence), Liberale da Verona (Siena), and Sir John E. Millais. "The Prodigal Son," on the other hand, is a favorite subject of artists: Murillo (Madrid), Franz Francken II. (Louvre), Holbein (Liverpool), Teniers (Louvre), E. Dubufe (New York), Salvator Rosa (Petrograd), Rubens (Dresden), Jordaens (Dresden), Albert Dürer, Rembrandt (Petrograd), Murillo (London), William Morris Hunt (Boston), Tissot, etc.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Morrison's *The Wings of the Morning*. Simpson's *Christus Crucifixus* (five chapters). An especially fine sermon in Nicoll's *The Lamp of Sacrifice*. Chapter in Dale's *The Epistle of James*. Talmage's *Sermons*, Vol. 6. Beecher's *Sermons*, Vol. 3. Berle's *Modern Interpretations of the Gospel Life*. Farrar's *In the Days of Thy Youth* and *The Fall of Man*. Horace Mann's *Twelve Sermons Delivered at Antioch College*. Cox's *Expositions*, Vol. 4. Hepworth's *Herald Sermons, First Series*. Aitken's *The Love of the Father* (all on the parable and related subjects). Chapman's *"And Peter."* Macmillan's *The Daisies of Nazareth*. Moody's *Hold the Fort*. Morrison's *Footsteps of the Flock*. Bushnell's *Sermons for the New Life*. Burrell's *"For Christ's Crown."* McClelland's *The Mind of Christ*. Watkinson's *The Duty of Imperial Thinking*. Kingsley's *Discipline*. Thompson's *God and the Sinner* (the entire volume). Phillips Brooks's *The Light of the World*. Munger's *The Appeal to Life*. Richards's *God's Choice of Men*. Summerbell's *Faith for the College Man*. Hodges's *The Path of Life*. Banks's *The Great Portraits of the Bible*. Deems's *Sermons*. Many sermons by Spurgeon, George Dawson, Sam Jones, Finney, Robertson, Greenhough, etc. *Works on the parables* by Dods, Taylor, Lang, Trench, Stretton, Arnot, Hubbard, Guthrie, Goebel, etc.

**I. THE FATHER SEEKING THE LOST**, vs. 1–10. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP. Luke groups together in this wonderful chapter three parables of the seeking love of God. The first is the story of the shepherd from whose flock of a hundred sheep only one strayed away ; yet he left the ninety-nine in the pasture ground and toiled among the hills till he found the lost sheep, over which he had great rejoicing when he brought it safely back.

This parable does not teach that the Good Shepherd does not care for the ninety-nine sheep that do not stray, but that "with God as with men that which is lost occupies, for the time and until restored, more of his thought and provokes clearer

and larger manifestations of his love than that which has not been lost or is already restored." — *Marcus Dods.*

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN. This is the story of a woman whose fortune consisted of ten silver drachmas, worth about sixteen cents each, able to buy, in all, about as much as sixteen dollars of our money. They were doubtless cherished heirlooms, worn in a string on her head. She lost one of the coins, and forthwith, peering everywhere with a lamp in the dark house and sweeping everywhere with a broom over the rush-covered floors, she did nothing but hunt for the coin. And when she found it, she called together her friends and neighbors for a general rejoicing such as would be sure to be held in the simple friendliness of an Eastern village.

From a photograph.
The Lost Piece of Money.
Sir John Millais.

This parable, like the preceding, was a rebuke to the Pharisees who objected to Christ's associating with sinners, seeking to redeem them. "The lesson plainly is that, if a woman has such gladness over the finding of a lost piece of money that she cannot but call upon her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her, much more ought all right-thinking persons to rejoice with God over the recovery of lost sinners." — *William M. Taylor.*

1. Christ taught that sinners are *lost.* There is no paltering with the awful fact of sin and the endless doom involved in it without a Saviour.

2. Christ taught that lost sinners still have possible value, are worth seeking.

3. He taught that their value is so great as to warrant the most eager pursuit even on the part of God himself, and how much more of God's creatures.

4. He urged persistency in the search for lost souls, and single-hearted devotion to it. This is the main object of his church.

5. He pictured the joy of God over the recovery of sinners. In no other way can we so contribute to the happiness of heaven as by bringing back lost souls to their seeking Father.

6. "The Christ who found the one sheep may find the others one by one." — *Rev. William R. Richards, D.D.*

THE SEEKING LOVE OF GOD. "The three parables of this chapter are not three separate stories, but three little chapters of one story of the soul of man. They are related like the three primary colors which mingle in white light. The story of the lost sheep is like the red, the story of the lost coin like the blue, and the story of the lost boy most luminous, nearest the white truth, is the yellow. The three stories read together, red, blue, and yellow, throw the white light on the great fact of sin."— *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.*

"It is astonishing how lightly the natural man thinks of sin! He is far more troubled by a physical infirmity than by a moral fault. He will rather suffer a bad conscience than a bad tooth. A trifling breach in etiquette causes him to blush as he never does for his wickedness." — *Rev. William L. Watkinson, D.D.*

Just the opposite of this is true of God, who is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. "If the main characteristic of Christ were reduced to one phrase, it would be, —a passion for saving the lost." — *Theodore T. Munger.* Christ came to earth to demonstrate the seeking love of God.

II. **THE WANDERING SON RETURNING TO HIS FATHER**, vs. 11–24. The parable of the prodigal son "is perhaps the most beautiful of all the parables of Christ." — *R. W. Dale.* "It is admitted to contain the very essence of the gospel,

11. And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of *thy* substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living.

14. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want.

15. And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

---

the good news which Christ came to bring us. It has been called ' the pearl of parables.' " — *Samuel Cox.* " The exquisite story is without a parallel in literature." — *Rev. Randolph H. McKim, D.D.*

11. **And he said, A certain man had two sons.** " Here is *ownership* in some sense." — *Charles F. Deems.* The prodigal was lost to himself, but also he was the father's, and the father lost him.

12. **And the younger of them said to his father.** Youth is more likely to be restless than maturity, is more heedless, lives more for pleasure. **Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me.** The older son would have two-thirds, the younger one-third, according to Deut. 21 : 17. **And he divided unto them his living.** " The father makes no sort of difficulty of compliance with his request. This may teach us that when we elect to break away from our proper relations with God, and to assert our own independence of him, we are free to do so. God does not constrain our will, however much it may cut him to the heart that we should wish to adopt such a course." — *Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken.* From the conclusion of the parable it would seem that the elder son left his share in the father's keeping.

13. **And not many days after.** He was in headlong haste to get away from his real happiness to his fancied joy. **The younger son gathered all together.** He would need to convert all his goods into money or portable valuables such as gems. **And took his journey into a far country.** Perhaps to Corinth, or Alexandria, or Rome. He wished to run riot in all excesses, but was ashamed to do so where he was known. How many post off to the cities or distant lands for no better reason! **And there he wasted his substance with riotous living.** " Every man who lives for the world and not for God is simply wasting his powers." — *Canon Thompson.*

14. **And when he had spent all.** He spent more than his money, — his health, his self-respect, his peace of mind, his character, *all.* **There arose a mighty famine in that country.** Every " far country " is a land of famine. The richest man on earth, without Christ, is famished. **And he began to be in want.** " Abundance " — that is God's word ; " want " — that is Satan's word, however he tries to hide it. " A good many men who are living in sin wonder why it is that God does not answer their prayers. Well, God loves them too much to answer their prayers. Suppose the son had written his father a letter saying, ' I am in want ; suppose you send me some money.' The father would have loved him too well to answer that prayer." — *D. L. Moody.*

15. **And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country.** Among all his fellow carousers, he has not a friend. "He had scorned his father, and he is become a slave." — *President Martyn Summerbell.* **And he sent him into his fields to feed swine.** " Feeding swine in the East was the most despised of all vocations. It was so considered not only among the Jews, but, as we learn from Herodotus, among the Egyptians also. The Roman poet, Martial, confirms this. It was very different from tending sheep. Jacob and Moses and David tended sheep. That was an honorable occupation, and a man's distinction was often estimated by the numbers of his flock. But the Orientals had a proverb : ' Cursed is he who feeds swine.' It was held in very different estimation from what it is in Kentucky and Ohio." — *Horace Mann.*

16. **And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat.** " The word rendered ' husks ' means ' little horns,' *i.e.*, the long, coarse, sweetish,

17. But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger!
18. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight:
19. I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

---

bean-shaped pods of the carob-tree, which were used only by the poorest of the population." — *Cambridge Bible.*

*Illustration.* So in the terrible famines that afflict China the people gather up dried leaves and sticks and all weeds and fill their stomachs with them, trying to extract some nourishment from them.

**And no man gave unto him.** "He longed to be free, and he was free to starve." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "An English soldier, who had been wounded in one of the battles of Egypt and left behind on the march, lay under the shadow of a rock in the desert. He had given up heart and hope; but as he looked upward he saw a vulture circling about him and waiting, waiting for its prey. The sight drove him to quick resolve. He struggled to his feet and staggered on with a purpose to live." — *Rev. D. J. Burrell, D.D.* So does the heartlessness of a prodigal's companions often drive him back to the true Friend.

17. **But when he came to himself.** "Then in his years of riot he was not himself. It was not the prodigal who was the real man. The real man was the penitent, not the prodigal. That was one great aim of Jesus' toil on earth, to make men and women their true selves." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "Since one's true self is to be found in his nobler attributes, he who leaves these unused and lives in the lower range of faculties may be truly said to have forsaken himself. It is as if a man, inheriting a magnificent palace, should shut up every one of the numerous apartments except the eating-room, and there live and feed." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

**He said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare.** "This was the beginning of a better life; for the first step toward anything better is to realize that there is something better." — *Dean George Hodges.*

*Illustration.* "The early life of the poet Virgil was spent in the rural districts of Northern Italy, but there is no evidence that he enjoyed the pastoral life. But when he became immersed in the cares and luxuries of the city, he thought with delight of those scenes of his youth, and the Eclogues which he wrote are the mental transformations of them. So also the life of sin and of selfishness looks free and ideal till we get to it. Then its sordidness and shame come to our view." — *Prof. A. A. Berle.*

**And I perish here with hunger!** "Eat of the bread of life, and you shall hunger no more. But sit down at the world's feast, and ever as the food grows coarser and scantier the craving hunger gnaws with keener pangs." — *F. W. Farrar.*

18. **I will arise and go to my father.** Doubtless the devil tempted him to remain: "Think of the disgrace of going home in this condition! Put it off till you can present a better appearance. How do you know your father will not drive you away?" But the prodigal had some sense at last; he knew it was then or never; he set against the devil's crafty suggestions his own sturdy "I will."

How about the boy's mother? Surely, if she were living, he would go to her. Perhaps the boy's wrongdoing had driven her to an early grave. At any rate, we must remember that Christ's picture of the Divine Father includes Divine Motherhood.

**And will say unto him, Father.** "What is the keyword of the prodigal's great representative utterance? What is it that expresses all the new energy of purpose that has come into a jaded and embittered life? Is it not the word 'Father'? He whose heart had been set on the portion of goods has learned that in the strongest, tenderest personal relations lies the only end which is worthy of a human being." — *Principal J. G. Simpson, D.D.* **I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight.** "There is no other road back to God but that which leads through the valley of contrition and repentance." — *Rev. Randolph H. McKim, D.D.*

19. **And I am no more worthy to be called thy son.** "When he knew that he was not worthy to be called a son, then he knew how great a title it was." — *Prof. A. A. Berle.* **Make me as one of thy hired servants.** "Casual laborers, inferior to the

20. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

---

slaves, as tramps lured by a farmer for harvesting are reckoned inferior to the men on the farm engaged from year to year." — *Adeney.*

20. **And he arose, and came to his father.** "It is not sufficient for the mind to possess a purpose. The purpose must possess the mind. The prodigal had come to himself, but he had yet to come to his father." — *Canon Thompson.* "The road to hell is paved with good intentions," but so also, thank God! is the road to the Father's house. **But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him.** He was on the lookout for his son, had been watching for him every longing day. "A modern writer has said that the feature of the parable is the magnificent repentance of the prodigal. It was a magnificent repentance, a repentance that made no excuses, that humbled itself utterly. But more magnificent by far was the forgiveness of the Father. How Jesus delighted in God the Father as he told this story. This was the love which had been the life of Christ." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* **And was moved with compassion.** The prodigal was not moved with love, but only with need. **And ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.** Greek: "kissed him over and over." "It was Christ that told us that the Father ran, and he knows more than any one else can know of the swiftness of the divine love." — *Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken.*

The Prodigal's Return.
William M. Hunt. Boston Art Museum.

21. **And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned.** He intended to ask for a servant's place, but his father would not let him finish. "The father was not out hunting servants, his heart was hungry for sons." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

22. **But the father said to his servants.** The father's exclamations and his running would draw a crowd of slaves to the scene. **Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him.** "The best robe" was a long, flowing garment, wrapped around the young man's rags, mercifully hiding them from sight. **And put a ring on his hand.** "The ring is always the emblem for completeness. And this was a beautiful illustration of the fact that the father's love was perfect, and that his love had not been affected by the wanderings of the boy. This is certainly true of God." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.* "The ring was regarded as an indispensable article of a Hebrew's attire, since it contained his signet." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* **And shoes on his feet.** He was barefoot and footsore; besides, slaves went barefoot, and only free men were shod. The best robe and the golden ring with a signet would also be tokens that the boy was to be no servant, as he had proposed to himself, but was to be restored to his place as son.

23. And bring the fatted calf, *and* kill it, and let us eat, and make merry:
24. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

23. **And bring the fatted calf, and kill it.** The calf had been fatted in anticipation of some feast; Adeney suggests that the elder son was soon to be married. **And let us eat, and make merry.** Christ often portrayed the Father's love in connection with a joyful feast, and he was evidently happy in such gatherings.

"'Tis thus the Lord his love reveals,
To call poor sinners home;
More than a father's love he feels,
And welcomes all that come." — *John Newton, "Olney Hymns."*

24. **For this my son was dead, and is alive again.** Sin is the real death, as Christ sees the truth; what we call death is only a short sleep. **He was lost, and is found.** Found in the only way the son could be found, found by his own better nature. **And they began to be merry.** "'Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven, whose sin is covered.' Oh! far, far more blessed is he who has no deep sin to cover, no flagrant unrighteousness to forgive. He had sat among the swine, nor could the past ever become for him as though it had not been. But now he was at home, and as long as he stayed in his father's home his soul was safe." — *F. W. Farrar.*

"These fuller, deeper draughts of bliss
Which the exhausted fill,
The ring, the robe, the feast, the kiss,
They all await me still." — *John S. B. Monsell.*

III. **THE UNKIND ELDER BROTHER**, vs. 25–32. The elder son had spent the months in the field, hard at work, and that is far better than the far country with its riotous living. All honor to the faithful church of Christ! With steady fidelity it tills the home farm, raises grain to feed the fatted calves, keeps the barns and the house in good repair. It has little or no romance, long hours, and many a backache.

Christ honors the elder son. "All that is mine is thine," he quotes the Father. But Christ does not honor the elder brother's hardness of heart. "Thy son," says the surly man, and not "my brother." "He has spent your hard-earned money on harlots," says the elder son uncharitably, though he did not know it. The elder son even dares to rebuke his father: "You never gave me so much as a kid to feast upon."

It was the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees toward the publicans and sinners that flocked to hear Christ, that bathed his feet in their tears of repentance. It is the attitude of far too many respectable churches to-day, that have no room in their respectable pews for the criminals, the outcasts, or even the poor; that is, they have no room in their hearts or their purposes for the essence of Christianity, the Father-eagerness, the sacrifice of the Eldest Brother.

EVERY CHRISTIAN AN EVANGELIST. "Though there is a deep truth in Paul's declaration that 'whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,' that declaration does but contain half the truth. We reap what we ourselves sow, but we also reap what Christ sowed." — *R. W. Dale.* Repentant prodigals do not reap all the punishment they deserve, because the Redeemer of prodigals has suffered for them. This is the message which Christianity brings to sinners, and every Christian is to pass the good news along.

Before we can reach other sinners with the gospel, we must receive it ourselves. We are likely to think that a prodigal is one who has committed some terrible, outstanding sin; but every one is a prodigal who has sinned at all, and all have sinned.

*Illustration.* "In the time of Mary the persecutor, a persecutor came to a Christian woman who had hidden in her house one of Christ's servants, and the persecutor said, 'Where is that heretic?' The Christian woman said, 'You open that trunk and you will see the heretic.' The persecutor opened the trunk and on top of the linen in the trunk he saw a glass. He said, 'There is no heretic here.' 'Ah,' she said, 'you look in the glass and you will see the heretic!' As we take up the mirror of God's Word, would that instead of seeing the prodigal son of the text we might see ourselves — our want, our wandering, our sin, our lost condition." — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

"There is no human being set to do duty who may not, if he will, throw behind his own weakness this great strength: 'If I can only persevere, if I only can be faithful,

I may rejoice with God!'" —*Phillips Brooks.* And to no work does this thought apply more blessedly than to the work of evangelism.

"Man is the only jewel; there is no true gold but him on the planet. Why does man pass by man and go after something that glitters, or stretches wide, or reaches high?" — *Theodore T. Munger.* Every Christian must be an evangelist because evangelism is the occupation best worth while, the one aim and desire of his Lord and Saviour.

## LESSON IV (18). — January 28.

## THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. — Luke 16.

### PRINT vs. 19-31.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.* — 1 TIM. 6 : 17.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 37 : 1-9.
**Reference Material** : Ps. 49 : 6-20 ; 73 ; 2 Cor. 8 : 1—9 : 15 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 17-19.
**Primary Topic** : A STORY OF A RICH MAN AND A BEGGAR.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 16 : 19-22.
**Memory Verse** : He that hath pity on the poor, happy is he. Prov. 14 : 21.
**Junior Topic** : THE POOR RICH MAN AND THE RICH POOR MAN.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 16 : 19-31.
**Memory Verse** : 1 John 3 : 17.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : PENALTIES OF SELFISHNESS.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : RIGHT USES OF WEALTH.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes**, following the suggestion of the Lesson Committee, may omit the terrible scene in hell, and close the story with the deaths of Dives and Lazarus, and the triumphant carrying of the beggar to the great feast where Abraham is the host.

**The Junior Classes** will study the whole parable, applying it to the many opportunities for helpfulness and unselfishness which they have in their own lives. They may make a list of the Lazaruses they have a chance to bless.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes**, at the end of the lesson, may dictate to the teacher as he writes a list of foolish and another list of wise uses of money, a dollar bill being pinned at the head of the lists.

**The Older Classes** may make this lesson the occasion of a study of the Christian attitude toward riches. Near the close of the lesson hour you may have a debate, "Resolved, that a Christian should not seek for riches," the class being divided into two sides and making one-minute speeches alternately.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — January, A.D. 30, three months before Christ's crucifixion.

**Place.** — Somewhere in Peræa, the country east of the Jordan.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Bible stewards, Old and New Testaments.
The Bible on business ethics.
The meaning of "mammon."
Old Testament light on the hereafter.
Christ's revelations of heaven and hell.
The Christian use of wealth.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : True Riches, and How to Use Them.**

I. GOD OR MAMMON? Vs. 1-18.
The parable of the unjust steward.
Trying to serve two masters.
"God knoweth your hearts."

II. THE POOR RICH MAN AND THE RICH POOR MAN, vs. 19-31.
Poor Dives.
Rich Lazarus.
The great gulf fixed.
How to use our money.

### THE LESSON IN ART.

The parable of the unjust steward has been illustrated by Liberale da Verona (Siena) and by Andrea Meldola (Berlin). The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is pictured by Jacopo Bassano (Vienna), Bonifazio (Venice), Teniers (London), Heinrich Aldegrever, Tissot, Doré, etc.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Spencer's *Five Last Things*. Hodges's *The Human Nature of the Saints* and *The Path of Life*. Morrison's *The Wings of the Morning* and *Footsteps of the Flock*. Burrell's *The Golden Passional*. Dawson's *The Reproach of Christ*. Goodell's *Pathways to the Best*. Goulburn's *Occasional Sermons*. Talmage's *Sermons*,

Vol. I. Liddon's *Sermons to the People*. Matheson's *Messages of Hope*. Mozley's *Occasional Sermons*. Wilson's *The Ideal Humanity*. McNeill's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. Moody's *The Way Home*. Wesley's *Sermons*, No. 117. Taylor's *Limitations of Life*. Nicoll's *Ten-Minute Sermons*. Finney's *The Way of Salvation*. Cross's *Church Reader for Lent*. Blake's *After Death, What?* *Sermons on the Gospels, Trinity to Advent*. Welles's *Sermons and Addresses*. Asterius in Anderson's *Ancient Sermons for Modern Times*. Martyn's *Sermons*. Burgess's *Sermons on the Christian Life*.

**I. GOD OR MAMMON?** Vs. 1–18. THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD. In this chapter Luke sets down some of our Lord's teachings in regard to wealth. Money plays so large a part in the life of to-day and especially in our rich country that the chapter is for us one of the most important in the Bible. Christ's enemies also were the rich men of Jerusalem, and his friends were the despised poor, so that these utterances had much to do with hastening the final catastrophe of his crucifixion.

The parable of the unjust steward sets before us a rich man and his steward, — just two men of the world, with no close correspondence to God on the one side, and God's children or God's enemies on the other side. This steward was not a mere house-manager, but an estate-manager, whom the English call a bailiff and the Scotch a factor, having general charge of his master's business. Such men were often slaves, but this one was not, as his master threatens him with dismissal. His position was like that of Joseph in relation to Potiphar (Gen. 39 : 6).

The master was a trustful one, and did not ask to see the accounts ; but one day a secret charge against his steward was brought to him : " He is ruining your estate." So the master made a sudden call for the accounts, and told the steward he would lose his job. In dire extremity, for no one else would hire him as a steward, and he was too weak for manual labor and too proud to become a public beggar, the steward had recourse to his ready wit. While ostensibly preparing his accounts for inspection, he was still steward ; so he went to this debtor and told him to cut down his debt for a hundred *baths* of olive oil (about nine hundred gallons) and make it fifty ; and he went to another and bade him change his debt for a hundred *cors* of wheat (from eight hundred to twelve hundred bushels), and make it eighty *cors*. So he did to all the other debtors of the estate.

This was a doubly shrewd proceeding. In it the steward was probably honest for once, since he had doubtless been overcharging, and taking the profits for himself. By lessening the bills he gave proof of his special friendship in each case, and of his great influence with his master. He thus provided himself with a large number of possible patrons in case he should be dismissed.

His master learned what he was about, and warmly commended his shrewdness. He may even have retained him in his employ as an especially clever rascal ; we are not told. And this is the lesson of the parable, and the only teaching that Christ draws from it : so use this world's goods that you may win friends — not in the crumbling houses of earth, like the unjust steward — but in the everlasting abodes of heaven. Be prudent, not with that steward's shifty craftiness that answered only the moment's emergency, but with the far-seeing prudence that meets the demands of eternity.

TRYING TO SERVE TWO MASTERS. We are carefully to note that Christ, unlike some of his followers, does not despise this world's goods and bid us have nothing to do with them. " The mammon of unrighteousness " — wealth which is so often turned to wicked ends — will fail some day ; it is a weak prop for an immortal soul. But, while it lasts, we are to use it faithfully, use it to eternal ends, use it as an apprenticeship in managing the true riches of heaven which will never fail. Christ's teaching is all summed up in the word " steward," which he had just shown grossly misused. " You are stewards," he said to his disciples, " and all you own is not yours but God's. You can make yourself the servant of *it* or the servant of *God*. You can abase yourself before *it*, live for *it*, or you can use it for God and live for God. You cannot do both at once, for Mammon is a jealous master and so is God. Each of them positively requires the whole of you."

" GOD KNOWETH YOUR HEARTS." The Pharisees were trying to do what Christ had just declared to be impossible. They were trying, as so many to-day are trying, to serve both God and Mammon. But they were *lovers* of money, and therefore they were not *lovers* of God, but only served him with exteriors, with words and forms and ceremonies. *God knoweth your hearts*, Christ said sternly to them. He declared that every least word of God's law, yes, every least letter (Yod, the little letter, like i) and even every tip of every letter, should outlast the earth and sky. As an example

19. Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day:

20. And a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21. And desiring to be fed with the *crumbs* that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

of the way the Jewish leaders violated the divine law which they professed to revere, Christ instanced their shameful laxness in the matter of divorce, even Hillel, the famous religious teacher, having said that a man might divorce his wife if she oversalted his soup. "Your outward respectability is nothing," said Christ, "unless God, looking into your hearts, finds them pure and true to him." Then, to illustrate this, he told the following parable.

II. **THE POOR RICH MAN AND THE RICH POOR MAN**, vs. 19–31. "This is a parable most unique. It is full of antitheses. It is also full of judgments reversed and wonderful surprises." — *Rev. Charles L. Goodell, D.D.* "It is perhaps the most striking and terrible ever spoken by the Lord." — *William M. Taylor.*

19. **Now there was a certain rich man.** The name, Dives, is given to him from the Latin translation of the New Testament, and is not a proper name, but merely the Latin for "a rich man." Like most of the characters of Christ's parables, he is left without a name. **And he was clothed in purple and fine linen.** The purple was his outer garment dyed in the blood of the shell-fish, *murex purpurarius*. The fine linen was the inner garment made of byssus, of Egyptian flax, a beautiful thin cloth worth twice its weight in gold.

Tyrian Rock-Shell.
(Murex purpurarius.)

*Illustration.* Referring to a custom of his times, Asterius, Bishop of Amasia about 375–405 A.D., said in his sermon on this parable that rich men, "when they dress themselves and appear in public, look like pictured walls, and perhaps even the children surround them, smiling to one another and pointing out with the finger the picture on the garment; and walk along after them. On these garments are lions and leopards, bears and bulls and dogs, woods and rocks and hunters. . . . Do not portray the paralytic on your garments, but seek out him that lies sick."

**Faring sumptuously every day.** "Venison and partridge, delicate morsels of fatted calf, and honey, and figs, and dates, and pomegranates, and fish that only two hours ago glided in the lake, make up the feast, accompanied with riddles, and jests that evoke roaring laughter, with occasional bursts of music." — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

20. **And a certain beggar named Lazarus.** The name is Eleazar in Hebrew and means "God hath helped." This was the name of Christ's rich friend of Bethany, the brother of Mary and Martha. Our Lord signally honors the beggar in bestowing it on him, unless perhaps it was the real name of a real beggar known to Christ and his hearers — a beggar who may have died that very day in the town where Christ was speaking. **Was laid at his gate.** The Greek word is that for a stately portal, not an ordinary entrance. **Full of sores.** Eastern beggars display, as their stock in trade, the most horrible ulcers and deformities.

21. **And desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.** "Desiring eagerly, and not receiving what he desired." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* But Professor A. B. Bruce says that the sentence is "perhaps not intended to suggest that his desire was not gratified. Suppose morsels did come to him from the rich man's table, not meant for him specially, but for the hungry without, *including the wild street dogs*, would that exhaust the duty of Dives to his poor brother?" **Yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores.** The savage dogs, such as swarm in the streets of all Eastern cities, were kinder to the beggar than Dives ever thought of being, and supplied the only medical attention his ulcers received.

*Illustration.* "In one of the striking apologues of Tolstoi there is this story. A beggar sits in the bitter Russian cold stretching out his swollen and disfigured hand for alms. Tolstoi feels in his pocket for a coin, is troubled and ashamed to find he has none, and says at last to the silent, waiting beggar: 'Brother, I have nothing,

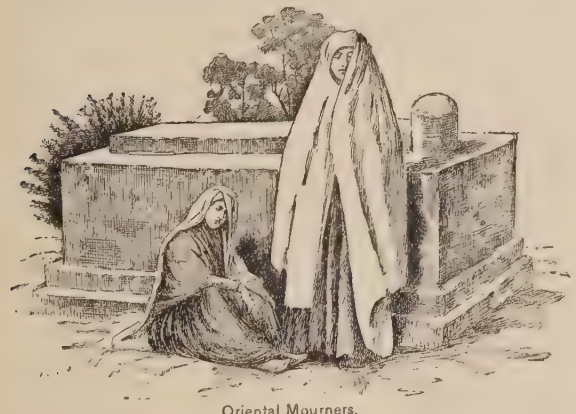
22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried.

23. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

but take your hand, and I love you.' For an instant the swollen hand of the mendicant is grasped in his; then the beggar looks up with moist eyes and says: 'Thank you, brother; that also is a gift.' That was an act of which Dives could not so much as dream." — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.*

22. **And it came to pass, that the beggar died.** "It happens that Death passes this way, invited by Starvation to the beggar, and by Surfeit to the rich man." — *Rev. Charles L. Goodell, D.D.* Nothing is said of the beggar's funeral — his worn body was tossed into a hastily dug hole. **And that he was carried away by the angels.** "To me this is always one of the splendid passages of the Bible; the calm, majestic tones in which Christ flings aside the curtain and passes in. To him 'the undiscovered country' is familiar and the books of judgment are an open scroll." — *John McNeill.* **Into Abraham's bosom.** The picture, as so often when Christ paints the happy hereafter, is of a feast, — fit scene in which to place the hungry beggar. The guests recline on their left arms at the low tables. Abraham is in the host's place, and next to him, in the place of honor, is Lazarus; thus, leaning back, he will lie in Abraham's bosom, as John lay in Christ's bosom at the Last Supper. **And the rich man also died, and was buried.** "They had a great funeral and made a great parade. There were many hired mourners and pipers who recited his praises and called upon all to weep. They laid him in a carved sarcophagus. There was a funeral feast of great extravagance." — *Rev. Charles L. Goodell, D.D.*

From a Painting by Doré.
Lazarus at the Rich Man's Gate.



Oriental Mourners.

*Illustration.* "A rich man in London, when the physician told him he must die, gnashed his teeth and clenched his fist and cried out vehemently, 'God, God, I *won't* die!' But he died with the very words in his mouth." — *John Wesley.*

23. **And in Hades.** Hades, corresponding to Sheol in the Old Testament, is, literally translated, "the unseen world," the abode of the dead, both the righteous

24. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.

25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish.

---

and the wicked. "Gehenna" is the New Testament word for the place of punishment, "Paradise" is the place of happiness and reward. Hades in this passage is equivalent to Gehenna. **He lifted up his eyes, being in torments.** "Dives lost his soul because, being rich and happy, he had been satisfied with that. The man had lost his soul because he had never taken the slightest pains to save his soul." — *Dean George Hodges.*

"The wounds I might have healed,
The human sorrow and smart!
And yet it never was in my soul
To play so ill a part.
But evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as want of heart." — *Thomas Hood's "Lady's Dream."*

**And seeth Abraham afar off.** "The rabbis taught that Paradise and Gehenna were near together." — *New Century Bible.* **And Lazarus in his bosom.** Evidently the rich man, in his careless way, was familiar with the sight of Lazarus, which adds to his sin in not relieving the beggar's distress.

24. **And he cried and said, Father Abraham.** Dives, even in hell, felt himself, as a Jew, to be a son of Abraham. **Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus.** He did not dare ask Abraham to come himself. **That he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.** "We may safely say that the form in which the sense of pain, with the desire after alleviation, embodies itself, is figurative." — *Archbishop Trench.* **For I am in anguish in this flame.** "It makes me feel very sad to hear men speaking so flippantly about hell, and making jokes about it. God is not to be trifled with." — *D. L. Moody.* This picture is a parable; since the dead do not possess such bodies as we possess, the flames of hell are not such flames as we make with wood and coal. Christ means that "sinners after death are full of want, and have no good at all." — *Charles Finney.*

25. **But Abraham said, Son, remember.** The wonderful faculty of recollection abides with us all through eternity. "The thought of eternal remembrance invests our life with solemnity. We are writing with a diamond on a rock We are writing in the Book of Remembrance with invisible ink. The thoughts we think, the words we speak, the kindly and unkindly acts of daily life, we must face them again. Take heed therefore. Live for eternity." — *Rev. D. J. Burrell, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "'Don't write there,' said a little newspaper boy to a dandified youth, when in the waiting-room of a railway station he saw him about to scratch something with a diamond ring on a mirror that was hanging on the wall; 'don't write there!' 'Why not?' 'Because you can't rub it out!'" — *William M. Taylor.*

**Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.** This does not mean that if a man is happy on earth he must be wretched in the next world; but Dives had been content with earthly good things, entirely centered upon them. "The rich man received what his choices and his life called for. In nothing are men allowed to have their own way more unreservedly than in the matter of the future." — *Rev. S. L. Blake, D.D.*

"Lord, make us truly wise
To choose thy people's lot,
And earthly joys despise
Which soon will be forgot:
The greatest evil we can fear
Is to possess our portion here!" — *John Newton, "Olney Hymns."*

**And Lazarus in like manner evil things.** God places each of us in the earthly condition that is best for our spiritual development, if we will use it aright. "If he send wealth, it is because the rich man would perish if poor; if he send poverty, it is because the poor man would perish if rich." — *Rev. Joseph L. Tucker, D.D.* **And now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish.** "The parable is practically an expansion of the beatitudes and woes of Luke 6: 20–26." — *Cambridge Bible.*

26. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.

27. And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house;

28. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29. But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.

31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

---

26. **And besides all this.** The phrase may mean, "in all respects." **Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.** "It would have been so easy to have bridged that gulf of disparity on earth — a single kind word would have done it." — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.* **That they that would pass from hence to you may not be able.** If even the blessed in the next world can do nothing, so certainly we in this world. "We are not even to pray for the departed." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* **And that none may cross over from thence to us.** "There is no promise of a new probation, no sign of another chance, no passing from the bad side to the good side of that great gulf. The parable sets a negative to that. Death, so far as we know, is the end of opportunity." — *Dean George Hodges.* "Holy Scripture presents one actual and one imaginary example of final impenitence. The actual example is Judas Iscariot, who is expressly termed 'the son of perdition,' and of whom our Lord confesses that he alone of all 'the glorious company of the apostles' was 'lost.' The imaginary example is the rich man of the parable." — *Dean Goulburn.*

27. **And he said, I pray thee therefore, father.** "Therefore" implies, "since nothing can be done for *me*." **That thou wouldest send him to my father's house.** How the conditions are reversed! What an absurd messenger Lazarus would have been regarded by Dives only a short time before!

28. **For I have five brethren.** "He might have wished that they should continue in the life of selfishness, so that they might be sharers with him in the rewards of selfishness." — *Rev. H. N. Grimley.* Dives in hell was not wholly bad. **That he may testify unto them.** Here was Christ, the Son of God, come from heaven to testify to men. "But what was the fact of men like the Pharisees, who did see him? Few were brought to repentance by all his discourses and miracles, few were his constant followers!" — *Henry Martyn, famous pioneer missionary to India and Persia.* **Lest they also come into this place of torment.** This thought for his brothers "is the most hopeful, perhaps the only hopeful thing, we know about Dives." — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.* If he had had such thoughts before death, he would not have gone to the place of torment.

29. **But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets.** The Jews regarded the writings of Moses (the Pentateuch) and of the prophets as the two main divisions of the Old Testament. These contain an abundance of directions for holy living and warning of punishment for sin, fully enough, if heeded, to keep any one out of hell. **Let them hear them.** Their written words speak as forcibly as any heavenly messenger could.

30. **And he said, Nay, father Abraham.** Dives remembered that he had had Moses and the prophets, and yet there he was in torment. **But if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.** Repent of what? "The family sin seems to have been avarice — the inability to give. Now, no avaricious man could be made less avaricious by an appearing of the dead." — *George Matheson.*

*Illustration.* Dr. Morrison tells of a boy who stood on a muddy road and promised God that he would become a Christian if there and then God would dry up the puddles. But he knew perfectly well that he ought to become a Christian without a miracle, and of course God did not send one.

31. **And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets.** By "hear" Christ means, of course, "hear and obey." **Neither will they be persuaded, if one**

rise from the dead. "What is this demand of Dives, virtually, but an indictment against God for not having furnished the rich Israelites of that day with sufficiently strong motives to holiness and amendment of life?" — *Canon Liddon.* Our Lord constantly refused the demand that he work miracles to prove his divine character and mission. He rested all that on the one great miracle of his resurrection. "Did the Jews believe in that wonderful resurrection then, when it took place? They did not and would not, but immediately set about explaining it away." — *Canon Mozley.*

HOW TO USE OUR MONEY. "There is spiritual danger connected with the possession of wealth. The Bible has great fears about men who have large means; but they are like the fears of the insurance companies about men who work in powder mills. The insurance companies have no personal dislike to these men. They do not by any means assert that such men will certainly be blown to pieces. But they know that a powder mill did explode the other day, and that other powder mills have exploded before, and they decline to take the risk." — *Dean George Hodges.*

"A great philosopher has written in his books that we should view all things *sub specie æternitatis*, we ought to consider things under the light, so to speak, of eternity." — *Rev. George H Morrison, D.D.* Especially, we ought to use our worldly goods in such a way as to minister to our welfare during the endless years when we shall not have them.

"What was the ladder by which Dives went down to hell? He cared for the body and the things of the body, but had not a thought for the immortal soul. He was prodigal in all those expenses which ministered to appetite and earthly pleasures, but oh! what a miser in the offices of devotion and works of mercy and ministries of charity, which are the delight and life of the soul." — *Bishop Edward R. Welles.*

"The condition which is dreaded by most is that of dependence, or of partial privation, or of diminished comforts. This was the very state in which our Saviour himself chose to pass the time of his pilgrimage. It cannot be the chief of evils to live as he lived, or even to take our place, in some measure, with the lowly Lazarus." — *Bishop George Burgess.*

Christ would not forbid the use of money for pleasure, but only for selfish pleasure. He did not rebuke Dives for his feasting, his fine clothes and luxurious house, but for the hunger and sickness of Lazarus. Christ wants all his children to live happily, but he knows that there is no happiness apart from helping others to be happy.

*Illustration.* When John D. Rockefeller, the richest man in the world, was asked to name the most successful business man he knew, he began to talk about the efficiency and the big heart of Frederick T. Gates, who for years served as Mr. Rockefeller's agent in his private and public benefactions. And when further the newspaper man asked Mr. Rockefeller in which of his own accomplishments he took the most pride, thinking that he would name the building up of the Standard Oil Company, Rockefeller began to talk of the good done by the Rockefeller Institute for medical research.

## LESSON V (19). — February 4.

## THE GRACE OF GRATITUDE. — Luke 17.

### PRINT vs. 11–19.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,*
*And into his courts with praise:*
*Give thanks unto him, and bless his name.* — Ps. 100 : 4.

**Devotional Reading**: Ps. 103 : 13–22.
**Reference Material**: 1 Chron. 29 : 10–16; Ps. 116 : 12–14; Matt. 18 : 21–35; Phil. 4 : 6, 7.
**Primary Topic**: A MAN WHO WAS THANKFUL.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 17 : 11–19.
**Memory Verse**: Give thanks unto him, and bless his name. Ps. 100 : 4.
**Junior Topic**: REMEMBERING TO THANK GOD.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 17 : 11–19.
**Memory Verse**: Ps. 100 : 4.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: THE GRACE OF GRATITUDE.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: CULTIVATING THE HABIT OF GRATITUDE.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will enjoy having the lesson acted out with the help of little dolls, ten of which are minus fingers or hands or feet, and wear bandages over the lower parts of their faces, besides being otherwise bandaged to represent lepers. Christ and his disciples will be represented by other little figures, well attired. The Samaritan leper will be represented by a complete doll, without bandages, substituted for one of the broken dolls. Be sure to enforce the lesson of gratitude to parents, teachers, pastor, and all other helpers, and especially to the Great Helper.

**The Older Classes** may study this chapter by sections, as outlined below, one student being assigned to each section to present its teachings in the best way he can, by a written paper, a talk, a reading, an object lesson, a picture. The chapter discusses six great themes: forgiveness, faith, service, gratitude, Christ's kingdom in the heart, Christ's second coming.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — If this event occurred at the beginning of his journey from Galilee to Peræa, the time was November or December, A.D. 29. If Luke follows here the order of events, Christ must have returned briefly to Galilee, the time being March, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — On the frontier between Galilee and Samaria.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's teachings on forgiveness.
Christ's view of faith.
Christ's requirements as to service.
Leprosy in the Old and New Testaments.
Evidences of gratitude or the lack of it on the part of those whom Christ blessed.
Christ's prophecies of his second coming.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The Grace of Gratitude.**

I. FORGIVENESS AND FIDELITY, VS. 1–10.
   Seven times a day.
   Faith as a mustard seed.
   Unprofitable servants.

II. MERCY AND GRATITUDE, VS. 11–19.
   The ten lepers.
   The grateful Samaritan.
   Cultivating the habit of gratitude.

III. WATCHING AND READY, VS. 20–37.
   The kingdom within.
   The kingdom's sudden coming.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The healing of the ten lepers has been illustrated by Girolamo da Cremona and Liberale da Verona (Siena), by Bida and by Tissot.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Raymond's *The Spiritual Life.* Gould's *In What Life Consists.* Hodges's *The Human Nature of the Saints.* Jones's *Seeing Darkly.* Neale's *Sermons for Children.* Brown's *The Master's Way.* Rev. E. Griffith-Jones in *The Miracles of Jesus.* Bancroft's *The Anthem Angelic.* Knight's *The Master's Questions to His Disciples.* Rev. D. D. Chapin in *Sermons on the Gospels, Trinity to Advent.* Baring-Gould's *Sunday Round,* Vol. 2. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible.* Aked's *The Courage of the Coward.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Mozley's *University Sermons.* Liddon's *Sermons.* Works on the miracles already referred to.

I. **FORGIVENESS AND FIDELITY,** VS. 1–10. SEVEN TIMES A DAY. In Luke's account of the words and deeds of our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem, we come now to a chapter filled with shorter sayings.

The first of these arose from Christ's prophecy that stumblingblocks would be placed in the way of his followers, others would sin grievously against them. These wicked persons, said Jesus, would be punished, but not by Christians. From those they had wronged they were to receive full and free forgiveness; yes, though the wrong were committed seven times a day.

Some of the rabbis had taught that three times was the limit of forgiveness required for the same offence, but Christ uses the perfect number seven, and calls for daily forgiveness, an indefinite and ever-repeated forgiveness.

Christ lays down only one condition of forgiveness, the repentance of the wrongdoer. Forgiveness should be ready before repentance: we should always carry a forgiving spirit; but it is no kindness to the sinner to express forgiveness before he asks for it. If he is unwilling to ask for it, he shows that he is unable to receive it, and to come into the new relation toward the person he has wronged which forgiveness implies. Even God cannot forgive us until we are sorry for our sins and ask his forgiveness.

FAITH AS A MUSTARD SEED. The second brief saying which Luke inserts in this chapter relates to faith, for the disciples had begged Christ for an increase in their faith in order that they might meet the severe requirements which he had been laying down.

Our Lord said that, so far from desiring an increase of faith, they could do wonders with even the least amount of that marvellous power: if they had only as much as

11. And it came to pass, as they were on the way to Jerusalem, that he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee.

12. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off:

13. And they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

---

could be symbolized by a single mustard seed, "the smallest of all seeds," they might say to the fig-mulberry tree (sycamine) by which they were standing, "Be uprooted instantly" (and it is a very deep-rooted tree) "and planted in the sea," and it would obey their word. Christ's own life was the most magnificent illustration of the power of faith ever given, and the strongest incentive to men to lay hold on this power.

UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS. Allied with this saying is the third, regarding the service that Christ has a right to require from his servants, such as endless forgiving and the exercise of superb faith. Christ reminded his disciples that men did not wait on their servants, but expected their servants to wait on *them*. Men do not await the convenience of their servants, but require the servants to observe their convenience. And when a servant does the obvious and necessary work of a servant, he is not given special thanks and rewards.

In the same way we are God's servants. He has a right to all we are and have, to all we can do at all times. Do our best, we are still unprofitable servants, we can lay up no special merit, earn no margin of profit for our Master. There is no room for pride and vain glory in a human life.

To be sure, if we do our best Christ will some day call us "good and faithful servants." He will even, in his graciousness (Luke 12 : 37), gird himself as a slave and wait upon us as we feast. But it is all an undeserved and unearned kindness, which should fill us with humility and gratitude rather than pride. With this, thought Luke passes naturally to the incident which is our main lesson.

II. **MERCY AND GRATITUDE**, vs. 11–19. The remarkable story recorded in these verses "shows how little spiritual value or efficacy the Gospel writers — taught by their divine Master — attach to mere miracle, and how essentially the Gospels differ in this respect from all legendary religious biography. We are here told that men may expect and even experience miracles without any real faith in Jesus, — with belief indeed in his power, but without surrender to his rule." — *Prof. John Laidlaw, D.D.*

11. **And it came to pass.** "There is no possibility of introducing historic sequence into the section of Luke lying between 9 : 51 and 18 : 15." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **As they were on the way to Jerusalem.** Professor Bruce thinks that this refers back to Christ's last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem mentioned in Luke 9 : 51, 52. **That he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee**; that is, the border line between the two provinces, thus explaining the mixture of Jew and Samaritan in the company of lepers.

12. **And as he entered into a certain village.** "It may have been at the very beginning of the journey." — *Alford's Greek Testament.* **There met him ten men that were lepers.** Separated from all healthy men by their foul disease, they were bound together in a brotherhood of misery. Leprosy is the most dreaded of all scourges. It eats into the flesh, causing awful sores, and the dropping away of fingers, toes, the features of the face, even entire limbs.

*Illustration.* Leprosy in the Scriptures is a meaningful symbol of sin. "I do not mean to say that this disease always had to do with sin, but it very often had; as you may remember how Gehazi, for the lie that he told, was covered with the leprosy of Naaman; and how King Uzziah, when he went into the Holy Place to offer incense, which only priests might do, had the leprosy rise up in his forehead; and how Miriam, because she rebelled against Moses, whom God had set over the children of Israel, in like manner was smitten with leprosy." — *Rev. J. M. Neale, D.D.*

**Who stood afar off.** "One afflicted by this loathsome disease was unfitted for social intercourse, both on account of the hideous disfigurements, the seams, cracks, and ulcers it wrought, and also by reason of its infectious character." — *Rev. J. Sparhawk Jones, D.D.* Lepers were required to keep their distance from all others. Their heads must be shaved, they must cover their upper lips, and they must warn others off with the cry, "Unclean! Unclean!"

13. **And they lifted up their voices.** It must have been a great effort, as one effect

14. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed.

15. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God;

of leprosy is to change the voice to a harsh whisper. **Saying, Jesus, Master.** They had at least some knowledge of Jesus, enough to call him Master; but they did not know him as the Son of God, and Christ's mercy flowed out to their great need rather than to their faith. **Have mercy on us.** They had heard that "he was the friend of lepers. He had been known once to show some kindness to a leper. Some said that it had happened more than once. This new teacher, of whom many strange things were reported, had touched a leper and healed him. It seemed incredible — not that he should heal him, but that he should touch him with his hand." — *Dean George Hodges.*

14. **And when he saw them, he said unto them.** He doubtless approached them nearer than the law allowed, to show his sympathy; and yet he did not put it into words. **Go and show yourselves unto the priests.** "Every leper went to the priests. If the tokens were not those of leprosy, the patient was to be discharged. If there were doubt, he was to be kept in confinement for one or two weeks, and then to be re-examined. If there were no doubt, he was to be declared a leper, and to be exiled from places where contagion with him might prove dangerous to others. Of this latter class, apparently, were those lepers which 'stood afar off.' They had been to the priests; why go again, unless they could show themselves healed?" — *Prof. George L. Raymond.* **And it came to pass, as they went, they were healed.** Probably most of them set out for Jerusalem, a long journey southward. "How strange it must have been to feel, as they went along, the gradual creeping of soundness into their bones!" — *Alexander Maclaren.* "Had they been touched, they might have ascribed their cure to some power of human magnetism. Had they been ordered to wash in water, they might have imagined some healing efficacy to reside in the water." — *Prof. George L. Raymond.* They could be healed by nothing but through faith in Christ, resulting in implicit obedience to Christ. Our Lord shut them up to this one thing, and as they accepted it, to the exclusion of everything else, they were healed.

One Leper Returned to Give Thanks to God.

*Illustration.* Thus a student, wishing to solve a difficult problem, shuts himself away from all distractions and concentrates his mind upon it, giving his brain a chance to work. As he goes on to think, the solution comes to him. Thus also as we use the outward forms of religion, — baptism, joining the church, partaking of the communion, attending church services, prayer, Bible reading, Christian work for others, — the spiritual realities back of these forms enter into our lives. Thus Christ said that in the doing of his will we should come to know his teachings.

15. **And one of them, when he saw that he was healed.** "On they swept, without pausing to look back, showing by their gait that they were in transport of joy at their cure, and in a frenzy of haste to receive the priestly absolution from banishment — for had they not all some dear one whose face they longed to see, and hand to clasp?" — *Rev. E. Griffith-Jones.* **Turned back.** "The Samaritan was on his way to his own priests at Gerizim." — *F. W. Farrar.*

"Wilt thou full health attain,
Let thy heart utter joy's exulting strain;
To Christ who cleansed thee turn;
Then shalt thou know, at last,
A fuller bliss than all thy unblest past,
High thoughts that cleanse and burn." — *E. H. Plumptre.*

16. And he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17. And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

**With a loud voice glorifying God.** How different this clear cry from the croaking utterance of his petition for healing! "This is the right worship of God, to return glorifying God with a loud voice." — *Martin Luther.*

*Illustration.* "There is a man who has a nickname. In the different parts of the country to which he goes he is known by the name of 'Hallelujah.' When he stops at a hotel and goes into the commercial room, the travellers say, 'Here comes Hallelujah So-and-So.' Why? Because he is a praising Christian. I think if I had the choosing of a nickname I would choose that." — *Dr. James Hood Wilson.*

16. **And he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks.** "The praise to God was heard at a distance; when the man was close to Jesus he prostrated himself to give thanks to his healer also. This double thanksgiving stands almost alone of its kind in the Gospel history." — *New Century Bible.* **And he was a Samaritan.** The Samaritans, inhabitants of the central part of Palestine, north of Judæa and south of Galilee, were descendants of a mixed race, the Jews left during the exile having intermarried with the Assyrian colonists placed there by the conquerors. They had the Pentateuch alone for their Bible, and were doubly hated by the Jews, as heretics and as mongrels. A handful of Samaritans — about one hundred and fifty — still remain at Nablus, the ancient Shechem, keeping up their ancient worship. "The fact that this Samaritan was of the number of these ten shows that their misery was so great that it overbalanced all their natural prejudices. Nine Jews in sound health would not have tolerated the company of a Samaritan." — *Dean George Hodges.*

17. **And Jesus answering.** Answering with a question the problem of the single healed man where ten should have appeared. **Said, were not the ten cleansed?** Jesus, of course, was in no doubt of the fact. **But where are the nine?** "The nine men could not have been entirely without gratitude — that would make them monsters of wickedness. But they did not give thanks openly and audibly. They were, like so many worshippers in the modern church, 'silent partners' in the work of praise." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.* "Perhaps what held them back was fear of the priests, who were angry enough at Christ already, and would not hesitate to vent their rage on any who spoke well of him, a rage which the Samaritan stranger could afford to despise; or possibly they may have said to themselves, 'Time enough for thanks when we have first proved the permanence of the cure.'" — *Rev. G. H. Knight.* At any rate, whatever the surface reason, the heart reason was a lack of grateful love for their Benefactor.

In the following poem, from *The Sunday School Times*, one of the nine is supposed to be speaking, years afterward, to Luke, the writer of the Gospel:

"I meant to go back, but well you may guess
I was filled with amazement I cannot express,
To think that after those horrible years,
That passion of loathing and passion of fears,
By sores unendurable eaten, defiled,
My flesh was as smooth as the flesh of a child!
I was drunken with joy, I was crazy with glee,
I scarcely could walk and I scarcely could see
For the dazzle of sunshine where all had been black;
But I meant to go back, O I meant to go back!

"I had thought to return, when my people came out.
There were tears of rejoicing, and laughter, and shout;
They embraced me, — for years I had not known a kiss:
Ah, the pressure of lips is an exquisite bliss!
They crowded around me, they filled the whole place,
They looked at my feet and my hands and my face;
My children were there, my glorious wife,
And all the forgotten allurements of life.
My cup was so full I seemed nothing to lack;
But I meant to go back, O I meant to go back.

"I had started — yes, Luke, I had started to find
The Healer so mighty, so tender and kind;
But work pressed upon me: my business, you know,
For all of those years I was forced to let go;

18. Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?

19. And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

I had tools to collect, I had orders to get,
I found my poor family burdened with debt,
My time was all taken with labor and care,
The days went more swiftly than I was aware
With the practical problems I had to attack;
But I meant to go back, O I meant to go back.

"I never supposed He would wait my return —
Just one of the ten, — and would linger, and yearn
As you tell me He did; why, Luke, had I thought,
There is no one on earth I would sooner have sought;
I'd have shown Him my body, all perfect and strong;
I'd have thanked Him and praised Him before the great throng;
I'd have followed Him gladly forever and aye,
Had I thought that He minded my staying away, —
He so great, I so little and paltry! — alack,
Had I only gone back! had I only gone back!" — *Amos R. Wells.*

18. **Were there none found that returned to give glory to God.** "The gratitude which Christ sought and missed was not for himself. It was God to whom he would have the glory given." — *Dean George Hodges.* **Save this stranger?** "Perhaps it was partly just because he was a stranger that he was the one to return. The Jew was apt to take everything that came to him as a matter of right, and wonder that he did not get more, as being one of God's peculiar people." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.* "A heathen is not seldom more sensitive to the beauty of Christ, and more touched by the story of his sacrifice, than we who have heard of him all our days." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

"Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not."
— *Shakespeare, "As You Like It," II., vii.,* 173.

19. **And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way.** Continue your journey to the priest and receive his testimony to your cure. **Thy faith hath made thee whole.** "The nine had been healed, and remained healed, but they were not 'made whole'; only he could be made whole who was lifted into the circle of divine relationship, and acknowledged God as the Giver of health and all good things." — *Rev. E. Griffith-Jones.*

CULTIVATING THE HABIT OF GRATITUDE. God loves to be thanked. "He who by precept and example reveals to us the nature and will of the Eternal, teaches us here and elsewhere that God cares: that God has pleasure in our prayers and in our praises: that therein we render some small return to him for all the joy with which he fills our lives." — *Dean George Hodges.*

"Nine-tenths of the earth's mighty populations have but little or no spirit of thankfulness. Let Jesus Christ come down into the United States on the annual Thanksgiving Day of the nation, and visit the various churches opened in response to Presidential proclamation, and there would come from his quivering lips the lament, 'Where are the nine?' It is the custom for several congregations to unite in service. It takes several churches to make one respectable group of worshippers on that day. Nine-tenths of the people are elsewhere." — *Rev. William Henry Bancroft.*

*Illustration.* "The Emperor Basil was saved, while engaged in hunting, from an enraged boar by one of his courtiers, and Constantinople was speculating upon the honorable decorations or the substantial gifts by which the servant would be rewarded at the hands of his grateful master. What was the astonishment, the consternation, the shame, when it was known on the following morning that the preserver of the sovereign's life had been ordered out to execution! The debt, it appeared,

could not be adequately repaid, and the creditor consequently became a personal enemy." — *Canon H. P. Liddon.*

"The moment when a man gets what he wants is a testing one. His benefactor is no longer necessary to him." — *Canon J. B. Mozley, D.D.*

"He who forgets to be thankful may one day find himself with nothing to be thankful for." — *Bishop Thorold.*

"If any one is disposed to say that he has nothing to thank God for, then thank God you are not a leper — a blistered, disfigured, offensive leper! Thank God that you are not suffering from evils that you could readily imagine, and concerning which you can show no sound reason why they have not overtaken you." — *Rev. J. Sparhawk Jones, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "A strong man says in the pride of achievement, 'Never since I was a boy have I been under obligation to any human being.' Nonsense! You are under obligation to a hundred unknown, lowly workers, and under obligation, too, to the greatest of mankind. You are debtor to the policeman on his beat, the deep-sea fisherman off the banks, the stoker in the furnace-room of the ocean liner, the driver on the swift express or electric car, and the man who drops the fenders between the ferry-boat and the landing-stage!" — *Rev. C. F. Aked, D.D.*

"No man ever comes into his right position as a sinner before God till he feels himself *worthy of nothing*, and is therefore *thankful for anything*. Jacob's way of it was the only befitting way, 'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies which thou hast shown unto thy servant.'" — *Rev. G. H. Knight.*

"What gives true value to our temporal blessings is that principle of gratitude and faith which recognizes everything as the gift of God's love and goodness. 'Where does the corn come from?' 'From the ground,' says the materialist; 'From the Father of lights,' says the Christian. And there is a whole world of difference between these points of view." — *Rev. E. Griffith-Jones.*

"To what is our civilization due? To Christ. Why do we differ from the heathen world? Christ is preached. What is the secret of all the moral and intellectual growth we see around us, of which we boast so much? Christianity. What is the secret of our material wealth and prosperity? The peace and security the gospel gives. And now how many of all these teeming millions return and thank God for it all?" — *Rev. D. D. Chapin.*

"Hereafter in the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly Land, there will be no more haranguing and lecturing — we shall have learned all we need to know. There will be no more praying, we shall have received all that we shall need. But praise will be unceasing, for our souls will burn with thankfulness, and it will be our delight to glorify God through eternity, just as it is a delight to the birds to twitter in spring." — *Rev. S. Baring-Gould.*

III. **WATCHING AND READY**, vs. 20–37. The Kingdom Within. John the Baptist had proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of heaven. For two years Jesus had been teaching the people about this kingdom. There was a wide expectation of it and a feeling that it was near at hand. Still it had not come, and a natural question for the hostile Pharisees to ask Jesus was, "Just when is this reign of God on earth to be set up?"

Christ's answer goes to the very root of the matter, and is as suitable now, after two millenniums, as it was at the very beginning of the discussion. "The kingdom of God is within you" — that was Christ's great saying. It does not come by exteriors, by startling phenomena, by anything that can be observed by the senses. It *results* in exterior phenomena, for character always works out in life, and all spiritual realities make their impress on this material world; but the kingdom of heaven is primarily a kingdom of the spirit. All views of the progress of Christianity, and all programmes for the extension of Christ's church, must bear this saying in mind.

The Kingdom's Sudden Coming. Over and over, during our Lord's last days on earth, he prophesied his second coming, warning his disciples to be ready for it. Here he tells them that it was to be like a flash of lightning — dazzling, sudden, irresistible. It was to come upon a heedless world as the flood came upon the careless mockers of Noah's day. It was to come upon mankind as the fiery hail fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah, blotting out those wicked cities of the plain and giving their inhabitants no chance to save their possessions. In preparation for that terrible day — a joyful day to Christ's true disciples — let them live in view of eternity; let them not live for the transitory things of this life. "*Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.*"

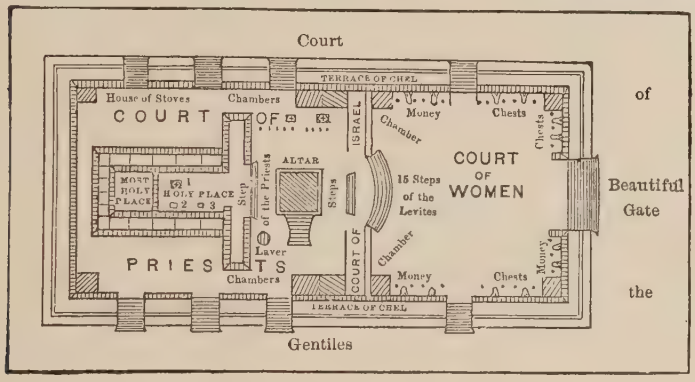
## LESSON VI (20). — February 11.

## THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER. — Luke 18.

**PRINT vs. 1-14.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* — Ps. 51 : 17.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 4 : 1–4, 8.
**Reference Material** : Matt. 6 : 5–15 ; Luke 15 : 20–24 ; John 4 : 23, 24.
**Primary Topic** : How Two Men Prayed.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 18 : 9–14.
**Memory Verse** : Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11 : 1.
**Junior Topic** : How to Pray.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 18 : 9–14.
**Memory Verse** : Luke 18 : 14.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Prayer That God Answers.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Secret of Prevailing Prayer.




Ground-plan of the Temple.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** would not understand the parable of the importunate widow, so that they are to study only the story of the Pharisee and the publican. They may be helped to visualize the parable by a little model of the temple and its courts, and by two little dolls dressed in Eastern costume placed in a court facing the sanctuary, one of them near it and the other at a distance. Have the pupils make a list of the things they should talk over with God when they pray : they should thank him for his kindness, remembering many of their blessings ; they should tell him what they have done that is wrong, say they are sorry, and ask him to forgive them and help them do better ; they should pray for others ; and they should ask him for what they want, but not for anything that they know is not best for them.

**The Older Classes** will study both parables of prayer, and also the acted parable of the healing of blind Bartimæus. Ask each to bring a list of the elements of prayer, also to come with illustrations of prayer from their own experiences and the experiences of others. It is a good plan to divide the verses of the lesson in advance among the pupils, asking each to prepare a set of questions on his verse and lead the class in the discussion of it.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — March, A.D. 30, one month before the crucifixion. The healing of the blind men, about a week before the crucifixion.

**Place.** — In Peræa and Jericho, on the way to Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The essentials of prayer.
Old Testament teachings on prayer.
Christ's teachings on prayer.
Eastern prayer customs.
Courts and justice in the East.
Pharisees and publicans of to-day.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : How to pray.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE URGENT WIDOW, vs. 1–8.
   The unjust judge.
   The earnest pleader.
   God hears his children.

II. THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN, vs. 9–14.
   The Pharisee's prayer.
   The publican's prayer.
   The humble exalted.

III. THE BLIND MAN'S PRAYER, vs. 15–43.
   The spirit of a child.
   The snare of riches.
   The blind men of Jericho.
   How to pray.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican is treated in the mosaics of St. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna; by Liberale da Verona (Siena), and by Tissot. Christ Blessing Little Children is shown in paintings by Adam van Noort (Brussels), Sebastien Bourdon (Louvre), Hess, Overbeck, Pfannschmidt, Benjamin West, Sir Charles Eastlake (Manchester, England), Hofmann, Thiersch, Plockhorst, Fritz von Uhde (Leipsig), Burne-Jones (Brampton, England), Ford Madox Brown. Christ and the Rich Young Ruler, by Hofmann, Bida, Tissot. The Blind Men of Jericho, by Lucas van Leyden (Petrograd), Poussin (Louvre), Bida, Tissot.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Morrison's *The Unlighted Lustre.* Jowett's *College Sermons.* Jones's *The Inner Circle.* Goodell's *Pathways to the Best.* Condit's *Short Studies of Familiar Bible Texts.* Nichols's *Sermons.* Maurice's *Sermons Preached in Country Churches.* Mandell's *The Heritage of the Spirit.* NcNeill's *Sermons,* Vol. 3. Knight's *The Master's Questions to His Disciples.* King's *Mary's Alabaster Box.* George Macdonald's *Unspoken Sermons, Second Series* (two chapters). McConnell's *Sons of God.* Farrar's *Everyday Christian Life.* Hodges's *The Heresy of Cain.* Parkhurst's *The Pattern in the Mount.* Liddon's *Sermons,* Vol. 1. Phillips Brooks's *Sermons,* Vol. 1. Knox Little's *Labor and Sorrow.* Spurgeon's *Sermons,* Vol. 5. Dr. R. F. Sweet in *Sermons on the Gospels, Trinity to Advent.* Banks's *The Christ Dream.* Kingsley's *Good News of God.* Moody's *The Way to God.* Hartzell's *Sin and Our Saviour.* Hastings's *Great Christian Doctrines: Prayer.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Illuminating discussion of the parable of the unjust judge in Osborne's *Four Bible Studies* and illustrations in Tristram's *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands,* pages 228, 229. Poems on the Pharisee and the publican by Crashaw and Plumptre; on the young ruler, by George A. Chadwick; on Bartimæus by Bryant, Longfellow, George Macdonald.

1. And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2. Saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man:

3. And there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

I. **THE PARABLE OF THE URGENT WIDOW**, vs. 1–8. The greater part of this chapter belongs to Luke's collection of the disconnected sayings of Christ which began with chapter 13. With verse 31, however, we enter upon the story of Christ's last journey up to Jerusalem, going from Peræa, the country east of the Jordan. The two parables which we are to study are found only in Luke.

1. **And he spake a parable unto them.** The disciples are the last audience mentioned (Luke 17 : 22), and probably they are the audience here. They, of all men, were to be in need of the practice of prayer. **To the end that they ought always to pray.** Literally, *must* always; prayer is an absolute necessity of the spiritual life. "Always" does not imply incessant prayer, but prayer under all varieties of circumstances, prayer under the pressure of every need and in the stress of every desire. **And not to faint.** Not to give up and cease praying because the answer to the prayer does not come at once or because doubts arise. All men pray at times; to the Christian alone belongs faith-filled and *persistent* prayer.

2. **Saying, There was in a city a judge.** "The little story is not improbably taken from life, and doubtless the inferior judges under such a sovereignty as that of the Herods might afford many instances of carelessness and venality." — *F. W. Farrar.* Peræa, it must be remembered, was ruled by Herod Antipas. **Who feared not God, and regarded not man.** He was thoroughly wicked, caring nothing for God's laws or for the approval of his fellow men.

3. **And there was a widow in that city.** Widows in the East were especially unprotected and in need of chivalrous treatment. The Old Testament in many places shows consideration for them, Ex. 22 : 22; Deut. 10 : 18; Job 29 : 13; Ps. 146 : 9;

4. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5. Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming.

6. And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith.

7. And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night, and *yet* he is longsuffering over them?

8. I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

---

Isa. 1 : 17, 23 ; Jer. 7 : 6 ; Mal. 3 : 5, etc. Christ's mother was doubtless a widow at this time, and our Lord showed his tenderness for widows more than once : Mark 12 : 40, 43 ; Luke 2 : 37 ; 7 : 12, etc. The early church made careful provision for them : Acts 6 : 1 ; 9 : 41 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 3 ; Jas. 1 : 27, etc. **And she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.** " Do me justice in the matter of my adversary." " Justice against my opponent! " is Professor Moffatt's translation. " Such a suppliant tests a man's character." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

4. **And he would not for a while.** Of course Christ is comparing this judge with his Father in only one particular, the delay in answering prayer. God's dealings are always in love. " The one sure way to ruin a child is to give it immediately all for which it asks ; and to the Ancient of days I fancy the oldest of us are but as little children. Then it is very helpful to remember that divine delay does not mean inactivity. God is not idle when he does not answer us ; he is busier preparing the answer than we think." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* **But afterward he said within himself.** Even he was ashamed to say it out loud, but he was shameless enough in the council chamber of his own breast. **Though I fear not God, nor regard man.** " The creed of a powerful atheist." — *Bengel.* Alas for the poor and weak when such men get into places of authority!

5. **Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her.** The judge is not moved by a sense of justice but by mere selfishness, as the neighbor in the similar parable of Luke 11 : 5–8 is not moved by neighborliness but is merely worn out by importunity. **Lest she wear me out by her continual coming.** Her endless coming ; literally, " her coming to the end." Moffatt translates it well by " pestering."

6. **And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith.** Literally, " the judge of injustice," a contradiction in terms. He was an unrighteous judge, not because his decisions were unjust, for in this case at least he judged righteously ; but there was no love of justice back of his decisions, whether right or wrong.

7. **And shall not God avenge** (vindicate) **his elect.** Read Rev. 6 : 9–11. " His elect " means his chosen people, a name often applied in the Old Testament to the Hebrews (Ps. 33 : 12, etc.) and in the New Testament to the Christians (1 Pet. 2 : 9, etc.) **That cry to him day and night.** Literally, " shout to him," no weak and fretful complaining is described. Compare Jas. 5 : 4. The prayer that is effectual is fervent and continued. But the feeble cry of a sick child or a poor widow shouts to God as loudly as the mighty appeal of a strong man. **And yet he is longsuffering over them?** This may mean that God is loth to punish the enemies of his elect, wishing to give even them the longest chance ; or that in spite of his delay in answering the prayers of his elect, he loves them and sorrows over them, and will vindicate them as soon as his wisdom sees to be best.

8. **I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily.** Speedily, that is, not as we see, but as God sees, for with him a thousand years are as one day (2 Pet. 3 : 8), and as we shall see in the clear light of eternity. **Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh.** When he comes the second time, in visible form to the earth. **Shall he find faith on the earth?** *This* faith, the faith that continues to trust and watch and pray in spite of God's seeming delays and the hardships that God's children must endure. Christ foretold " great tribulation " in those last days (Matt. 24 : 22), tribulation so severe as to test the faith even of the elect.

*Illustration.* " This is a question such as an able and beloved instructor might well ask himself on a commencement occasion. Surveying the bright and hopeful faces of his pupils about to receive their diplomas a serious question arises in his mind : ' All is well to-night ; but if I should return twenty-five years hence, would I find my pupils still loyal to the ideals I taught them? ' " —*Edgar DeWitt Jones.*

9. And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought:

10. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee,

---

GOD HEARS HIS CHILDREN. "Franklin hit the truth when he said, 'Kindle the dry sticks and the green will catch.' If the church is kindled, the world will be; and the kindling comes by prayer." — *Rev. G. H. Knight.*

"Be sure of God. With simple, loving worship, by continual obedience, by purifying yourself even as he is pure, creep close, keep close to him. Be sure of God and nothing can overthrow or drown you." — *Phillips Brooks.*

"Duty is a very sacred word, and we must do our duty. There is no duty, however, more imperative than that which is insisted upon by our Lord in the text that 'men *ought* always to pray, and never to give in.'" — *Canon W. J. Knox Little.*

"Then let us earnest be,
And never faint in prayer;
He loves our importunity,
And makes our cause his care." — *John Newton, "Olney Hymns."*

II. **THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN**, vs. 9–14. "In this parable we note three contrasts which impress its lesson: contrasted men, constrasted prayers, and contrasted results." — *Rev. George Henry Hubbard.*

9. **And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous.** Their trust was in themselves instead of in God. This was the faith — faith in poor humanity — which Christ would find on the earth at his second coming! Righteousness is a glorious thing, but self-righteousness is a broken reed on which to lean. **And set all others at nought.** "The Rabbis invented the most highflown designations for each other, such as 'Light of Israel,' 'Uprooter of Mountains,' 'The Glory of the Law,' 'The Holy,' etc.; but they described the vast mass of their fellow countrymen as 'accursed' for not knowing the law (John 7 : 49), and spoke of them as 'empty cisterns,' 'people of the earth,' etc." — *F. W. Farrar.* These self-righteous Jews regarded all others as mere ciphers.

The Pharisee and the Publican. Doré.

10. **Two men went up into the temple to pray.** The temple, the magnificent edifice built by Herod the Great, was on high ground, reached by a noble flight of steps, on Mount Moriah, "the Hill of the House," and going to it was always going *up*. The temple was built for the offering of sacrifices, but prayer also is a sacrifice, the offering of our spirits, most acceptable to God. These two men went not to the Holy Place reserved for the priests, but to the courts and colonnades; and they probably went at one of the hours of prayer, perhaps at noon or at three in the afternoon. **The one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.** Representatives of the most honored and the most despised classes of Jews: the Pharisees, strictest of sects, most unbending in their bigotry, fierce patriots, popular leaders; the publicans, collecting taxes for the hated Romans and keeping a large part for themselves, extortioners, cruel, greedy, dishonest.

11. **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself.** "With himself" is a sly touch — he certainly did not pray to God. "He simply draws a flattering por-

that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get.

13. But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.

---

trait of himself, and holds it up for the admiration of God." — *Rev. R. F. Sweet, D.D.* "The Greek word translated 'stood' implies taking up his position ostentatiously, striking an attitude. Standing was the ordinary posture of the Jews in prayer." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* **God, I thank thee.** This is the end of his reference to God in his "prayer." **That I am not as the rest of men.** Many make this boast in their thoughts though they would be ashamed to put it into words. "It is very dangerous to put men in different categories from ourselves. Differences there are between man and man, differences that may have to be noted and expressed; but there are no differences which justify us in forming a class of 'other men' in sharp and decided contrast to ourselves." — *Bishop Mandell of Peterborough.* **Extortioners, unjust, adulterers.** "The Pharisee's notion of righteousness was primarily negative, as consisting in abstinence from flagrant sins." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **Or even as this publican.** "There are two kinds of people of whom Jesus Christ especially disapproved — those who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and those who despise others. The two disastrous characteristics, as in this instance, often go together — content and contempt." — *Dean George Hodges.*

12. **I fast twice in the week.** "This was a *voluntary* fast, on the Mondays and Thursdays; the only prescribed fast in the year being the great day of atonement, see Lev. 16 : 29; Num. 29 : 7. So that he is boasting of his works of supererogation." — *Alford's Greek Testament.* "Fasting, let us remember, is as much a Christian duty as a Jewish. It is as much a Christian duty as prayer. Our Lord would not have condemned the Pharisee simply because he fasted twice in the week." — *Dean Liddon.* **I give tithes of all that I get.** "By referring to Lev. 27 : 30; Num. 28 : 21, and especially Deut. 14 : 22, 23, 28, 29, it will be seen that a tenth was required for the priesthood, another tenth for the sanctuary, and still another tenth once in three years for the poor. Surely such demands were sufficiently exacting, yet our Pharisee proclaims a self-righteousness that exceeds them all." — *Rev. Blackford Condit, D.D.* The law probably only required tithes to be paid of agricultural products and of the additions to herds and flocks; this Pharisee boasts that he also tithes money and other gains.

13. **But the publican, standing afar off.** Probably far off — not from the Pharisee, but from the Holy Place, which he thought he had no right to approach. **Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.** "Because the publican stood afar off, God brought him near by hearing his prayer; because, in his humility, he would not venture to lift up his eyes to heaven, God looked down from heaven upon him, and lifted up upon him the light of his countenance." — *Rev. R. F. Sweet, D.D.* **But smote his breast.** He was doubtless a bad man, but a bad man sorry for his badness is not far from goodness. "Penitence is heaven's latch-key. The power to loathe one's self is candidacy for sainthood." — *Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D.D.* **Saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.** Literally, "*the* sinner." To the publican, he himself was the only sinner in the world. "The best prayer for the best of us is, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' Only one man was happy when the hour of prayer was over. Cold came the Pharisee and cold he went away. In contrite tears the publican made his plaint, and God, who can see a tear farther than a star, sent him on with a happy heart." — *Rev. Charles L. Goodell, D.D.* "This prayer implies sorrow for sin, trust in the mercy of God, and resolutions of amendment." — *Rev. Samuel Nichols, D.D.*

*Illustration.* Dr. Louis Albert Banks tells of a merchant whose cash drawer had been tampered with, and who arranged an electric wire so that when the drawer was drawn out it would set off some flashlight powder and a kodak would take a picture. The trap worked, and a photograph of three boys was obtained. They stoutly denied their guilt until confronted with the mysterious photograph, when they broke down and confessed. There is a complete record of the sins of all, and the proudest soul, when faced with that record, must confess its guilt.

14. I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

14. **I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified.** "The pronoun perhaps looks back to the contemptuous 'this' of verse 11. 'This despised man went down justified in the sight of God,' *i.e.*, 'accounted as righteous, accepted.'" — *International Critical Commentary.* "He could not justify himself. God had justified him. He had given him a clean conscience and a right heart." — *F. D. Maurice.* **Rather than the other.** "Do you think that if the publican, after he had said, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' had said to himself, 'There — how beautifully I have repented — how honest I have been to God — I am all right now' — he would have gone down to his house justified at all? Not he." — *Charles Kingsley.* Justification admits no pride, even in confession. **For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled.** Ruskin's last words, in his *Modern Painters*, are a noble commentary on this verse: "So far as you desire to possess rather than to give; so far as you look for power to command rather than to bless . . . so long as the hope before you is for supremacy instead of love; and your desire is to be greatest instead of least, — first instead of last, — so long you are serving the lord of all that is last, and least; the last enemy that shall be destroyed — Death; and you shall have Death's crown, with the worm coiled within it; and Death's wages, with the worm feeding on them." **But he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.** God's forgiveness, such as the humble publican won, is an exaltation, lifting the penitent back beside his heavenly Father. The confession that wins this great boon must be "genuine, hearty confession, not the empty name of it or the unmeaning form." — *Rev. Henry M. King.*

III. **THE BLIND MAN'S PRAYER**, vs. 15–43. THE SPIRIT OF A CHILD (vs. 15–17). Jewish mothers often brought their babes to the leading rabbis for their blessing, and thus children were brought to Jesus. The disciples tried to prevent this, fearing that it would trouble the Master and hinder what they considered his more important work; but our Lord, as Mark tells us, was much displeased, and rebuked them. The little child, he said tenderly, is the very type of the citizen of my kingdom. No one can enter the kingdom of God until he is trustful as a child, humble, pure, loving, meek, teachable. These are also the characteristics of true prayer. The publican had many of them, the Pharisee lacked them. Children pray true prayers at their mothers' knee, and if we lose the child heart we lose the power to pray.

Christ Blessing Little Children. Plockhorst.

THE SNARE OF RICHES. The incident of the rich young ruler (vs. 18–30) shows us how men lose the child heart and with it the spirit of prayer. This wealthy young man was the head of the committee of laymen which conducted the affairs of the local synagogue, a young man of blameless life whose fresh eagerness and zeal for righteousness won the Master's love. It was through this very love that Jesus tested him with the requirement that he sell all his goods, give them to the poor, and join his band of penniless disciples. But the

young man failed, he made what Dante called in his picture of him "the great refusal." For the time, perhaps forever, he was held by the snare of riches which to this day keeps so many from Christ and from the blessed communion which is infinitely more valuable than all the gold of earth.

The Blind Men of Jericho. There were two blind men (Matt. 20 : 30) whom Jesus healed at Jericho, though one of them (Mark gives us his name, Bartimæus) was so prominent that Luke mentions him only. The healing of these two is a glorious acted parable of prayer :

1. Note their helplessness, dependent on passers-by to tell them even that Jesus was near.

2. Note the seeming hopelessness of their condition, for how could blind men expect to see?

3. Observe their determined energy, the vigor and persistence of their petition in the face of the shocked opposition of the bystanders.

4. They recognized Jesus as the Messiah, "the Son of David."

5. They had faith to ask the apparently impossible.

6. They received it, and instantly.

7. Note the result of their successful prayer : they followed Jesus, praising God openly, and thus leading others to praise him.

All of this should be imitated by us in our prayers.

How to Pray. "There is a communion with God that asks for nothing, yet asks for everything. To talk with God is more than to have all prayers granted. He who seeks the Father more than anything he can give is likely to have what he asks, for he is not likely to ask amiss." — *George Macdonald.*

It is not necessary to understand prayer in order to pray ; all that is necessary is to feel a need, and go to God with it. "Christianity does not appeal to common sense, but to common necessity." — *S. D. McConnell.*

"If you ask me, 'What should we pray for?' I answer, 'Everything which you need.' Remember only two things : one, that to ask only or mainly for earthly blessings is a dreadful dwarfing and vulgarization of the grandeur and holiness of prayer, as though you asked for a handful of grass when you might ask for a handful of emeralds; the other that you must always ask for earthly desires with absolute submission of your own will to God, lest God should grant you your own bane." — *F. W. Farrar.*

*Illustration.* "'Prayer is better than sleep!' the Mohammedan watchman cries, as he goes about the city through the silent watches of the night. We have a cause for which it would be only sane and wise did we rise, like John Welsh of Ayr, whose knees were callous with all-night prayer. He would rise at midnight, and fling a plaid across his shoulders, and go into his church that was next door to his house, and kneel down, and cry to God, 'I cannot sleep with three thousand people out there in the town, and I know not how it is with many of them.'" — *John McNeill.*

*Illustration.* Spurgeon concluded his great sermon on the Pharisee and the publican thus : "Let us use this prayer as our own *now*. Let every one, I entreat you, who desires to offer the prayer, and can join it, utter at its close an audible 'Amen.'

"*Let us pray.*

"God be Merciful to Me a Sinner." (*And the people did with deep solemnity say*) "Amen."

*Illustration.* Pray in confident expectation of receiving what you seek. D. L. Moody told the story of a little girl who, as her grandfather left home in the morning, took him to where she had formed on the floor with small crackers the words, "Grandpa, I want a box of paints." In the evening, when he came home, without asking whether he had brought the paints or not, she took him to where she had spelled out, "Grandpa, I thank you for the box of paints." That was praying in faith.

## LESSON VII (21). — February 18.

## JESUS AND ZACCHÆUS. — Luke 19 : 1–10.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.* — Luke 19 : 10.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 24 : 1–5.
**Reference Material** : Prov. 3 : 13–18 ; Matt. 9 : 9–13 ; Luke 16 : 1–13.
**Primary Topic** : Having Jesus for a Visitor.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 19 : 1–10.

**Memory Verse** : And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. Luke 19 : 6.

**Junior Topic** : JESUS IN THE HOME OF ZACCHÆUS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 19 : 1–10.
**Memory Verse** : Luke 19 : 10.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : HOW JESUS SAVED AN EXTORTIONER.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : CHRISTIAN STANDARDS IN BUSINESS.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes.** — You may well start the lesson by asking the pupils what they would do if Jesus should come to their house. How would they receive him? What difference would it make in their lives? Then tell the story of this man to whose house Jesus did go, and the difference it made there. Close by telling the class that Jesus may be living in their homes already. How can they tell? And if he is not, he is knocking to get in. Any one, even a child, may let him in.

**The Older Classes.** — These, as the Lesson Committee suggests, will be especially interested in applying the lesson to the important present-day matter of Christian standards of business. Try to have some experienced business man present who will tell how modern business departs from Christian standards. Discuss what can be done, by proprietors, workmen, and the general public, to bring business up to Christian standards. Covering this last topic, you may appoint three persons to represent those three classes.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — In March, A.D. 30, a week before Christ's crucifixion.

**Place.** — Jericho, a city about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Jericho, past and present.
Publicans and chief publicans.
Christ's attitude toward popular prejudices.
The sycomore tree.
What is conversion?
Is modern business Christian?

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT : How Jesus Saved an Extortioner.

I. ZACCHÆUS RECEIVES JESUS, vs. 1–6.
- The chief publican.
- In the sycomore tree.
- The unexpected invitation.
- Jesus in our homes.

II. ZACCHÆUS RECEIVES SALVATION, vs. 7–10.
- Murmurs of the bystanders.
- The conversion of Zacchæus.
- The promise of salvation.
- The great purpose of Christ.
- Christian standards in business.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

McClelland's *The Mind of Christ.* Dr. J. Frank Smith's *My Father's Business and Mine.* Jefferson's *Doctrine and Deed.* Banks's *Heavenly Trade Winds* and *Sunday Night Evangel.* Coyle's *The Church and the Times.* Nicoll's *Sunday Evening.* Jones's *The Gospel of the Sovereignty.* Brown's *The Quest of Life.* Shannon's *The Breath in the Winds.* Hodges's *The Human Nature of the Saints.* McDowell's *Good Ministers of Jesus Christ.* Morrison's *The Footsteps of the Flock.* Robertson's *Sermons, First* and *Second Series.* Talmage's *Sermons, Vol. I.* Whitefield's *Sermons.* Moody's *Hold the Fort.* Thompson's *Burden-Bearing.* Smyth's *Footprints of the Saviour.* Matheson's *Representative Men of the New Testament.* Deems's *Sermons.* Greenhough in *Men of the New Testament.* Macmillan's *The Spring of the Day.* McNeill's *Sermons, Vol. I.* Mark Guy Pearse's *The Gentleness of Jesus.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Spurgeon's *Sermons, Sixth Series.* C. J. Brown's *The Word of Life.* Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible.* Nehemiah Adams's *Christ a Friend.* Trench's *Studies in the Gospels.* Amos R. Wells's *Bible Miniatures.*

1. And he entered and was passing through Jericho.

I. **ZACCHÆUS RECEIVES JESUS**, vs. 1–6. "Zacchæus stands for the average man awakened by conscience." — *George Matheson.* His story stands out uniquely in the New Testament, is intensely vital, and is full of points of application to the present day.

1. **And he entered and was passing through Jericho.** Jericho ("the City of Palms," so called from its abundant palm-trees) was about six miles west of the Jordan and fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. Opposite Jericho Moses viewed the promised land. The city was taken by Joshua miraculously, the walls falling after the solemn procession of the Israelites around the city and their shout and the blasts on their rams' horns. It was opposite Jericho that Elijah and Elisha crossed the Jordan by a miracle. Jericho was once a large and rich city, but now it is only a wretched village called Riha. "Jericho — city of palaces and palms; city that Antony gave to Cleopatra; city that Herod purchased of Cæsar; city of wealth and poverty; city of joy and sorrow." — *Rev. Frederick F. Shannon, D.D.*

2. And behold, a man called by name Zăc-chæ'-ŭs; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich.

3. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.

4. And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

2. **And behold, a man called by name Zacchæus.** "The Talmud mentions a Zacchæus at Jerusalem of a later date, possibly a descendant of Luke's Zacchæus." — *New Century Bible.* "Well might the evangelist usher in the relation of this man's conversion with the word *behold!* For, according to human judgment, how many insurmountable obstacles lay in the way of it!" — *George Whitefield, the famous evangelist,* 1714–1770. **And he was a chief publican.** He was supervisor over the minor tax-collectors. Jericho was an important customs station for the Romans, partly because goods were taxed when passing between Judæa and Herod Antipas's province of Peræa across the Jordan, and partly because Jericho itself exported large quantities of balsam. **And he was rich.** In his position he had many opportunities of growing wealthy from bribes and extortion, and what he says in verse 8 implies that he had used those opportunities. "The Roman tax-collectors were not salaried men. The office was farmed out to the highest bidder. Then the man who got the job set the tax-rate. Of course his rate covered his price plus his profits." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland.*

3. **And he sought to see Jesus who he was.** "Not 'who he was' in the sense of 'what manner of person,' but 'which he was' of that confused multitude." — *Trench.* Zacchæus was himself despised, though a rich man, and he had doubtless heard that this famous rabbi did *not* despise publicans like himself, but associated with them and had even made one of them an apostle. No wonder Zacchæus wished to see the stranger. **And could not for the crowd.** Jesus was always surrounded by crowds, and no wonder. Wherever he is to-day, a crowd soon comes.

Zacchæus Climbed into a Tree to See the Lord.

*Illustration.* "I remember to have read that when Napoleon the Great was on his way to Russia, men, women, and children stood contentedly for days and nights, waiting to see him pass along his way; and a story is told of some clergyman in the far north of Scotland who trudged on foot all the way to London in order to see the Duke of Wellington, and when he had seen him he quietly thanked God and trudged home again, counting himself well rewarded." — *Mark Guy Pearse.* And Christ was the King of kings and Lord of lords.

**Because he was little of stature.** "It would have taken a Saul to see him well; there seemed no hope for a small man like Zacchæus; and had Zacchæus had a small heart in his bosom, he would have gone home and said it was impossible. But Zacchæus had had a great will to grow rich, and he had found there was a way to *that.* And now he had a great will to see Jesus, and he was not the sort of person to be stopped. The whole-hearted search for God is always crowned." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

4. **And he ran on before.** "In front of the crowd, to make sure; stationed at any point opposite the crowd he might miss his chance." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **And climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him.** "Sycomore" (do not confound it with our American sycamore) means "fig-mulberry," fig from its fruit and mulberry from its leaf. "It is in reality a kind of fig-tree. It is very common

5. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zăc-chæ'-ŭs, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner.

---

in the warmest parts of the Holy Land, and it puts out branches from its trunk so close to the ground that it is easy to climb up into it. This tree bears a kind of fig, but not a fig of the best sort. The common people eat it, but it has an insipid taste. You require, while it is still on the tree, to scrape or cut off the top of it to make it eatable; for if you neglect to do this before it is ripe, it becomes nauseous and corrupt. Amos the prophet was a cutter of sycomore figs. Zacchæus was like one of these figs. He was a mean kind of fruit, and needed to be subjected to cutting and training to make him palatable and useful." — *Rev. Hugh Macmillan, F.R.S.E.*

**For he was to pass that way.** "We would not have done what Zacchæus did. We are too stiff. We are too formal. We have too much starch in our souls. Your soul may be saved from sin, but scarcely from starch." — *Alexander Whyte.*

5. **And when Jesus came to the place.** Very likely Luke knew just what place it was. **He looked up, and said unto him.** "The crowd hooted at Zacchæus. At least, we may guess that it was from some derisive call that the Master learned the publican's name." — *Dean George Hodges.* **Zacchæus, make haste, and come down.** "'Zacchæus' — that was the tax-collector's name, but the people of Jerusalem never addressed him thus. They called him 'wolf,' 'dog,' 'bear.' These were the affectionate terms of endearment which orthodox Jews employed in addressing publicans. 'Zacchæus' — when Jesus uttered his name in tones of respect it was like a drink of cold water on a hot day." — *Rev. Charles R. Brown, D.D.*

> "Zacchæus climbed the tree,
> And thought himself unknown;
> But how surprised was he
> When Jesus called him down!
> The Lord beheld him, though concealed,
> And by a word his power revealed." — *John Newton, "Olney Hymns."*

**For to-day I must abide at thy house.** "When Jesus is about to confer a favor on any one, he often begins by asking a favor from *him.* Christ is coming to pardon Zacchæus; but he does not want this pardon to leave Zacchæus in the valley. He desires him to have a memory that he too was the bestower of a gift." — *George Matheson.*

6. **And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.** "Zacchæus had his faults, but sluggardliness was not one of them. Whatever he was, he was not a slow man. One of the chief factors of his success had been that when he had a chance for a good bargain, he never let it lie and get dusty, or gave the other party time to change his mind. Mr. Moody says that right there occurred Zacchæus's conversion, 'somewhere between the limb and the ground.'" — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

JESUS IN OUR HOMES. "Oh! it makes a great change in any house when Christ comes into it. Jesus is knocking at the door of your house. If you looked out of your window and saw me going up your front steps, you would not wait, but go yourself to open the door. Will you keep Jesus standing on the outside, his locks wet with the dews of the night? The great want of your house is not a new carpet, or costlier pictures, or richer furniture — it is Jesus!" — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

"Are you willing that Christ should come into your house? When you open your door on your return home, think, 'The Saviour has come here before me, and is waiting for me to welcome him.' When you shut your door to-night, and think, as you do it, whether all the family are within, ask yourself, 'Is the Saviour within? Or am I shutting the door upon him, and locking it against him, as I have done every night before?' He longs to abide with you and bless you." — *Nehemiah Adams.*

II. **ZACCHÆUS RECEIVES SALVATION**, vs. 7–10. 7. **And when they saw it, they all murmured.** "General muttered dissent (not even the Twelve excepted), which Jesus anticipated and disregarded. Note his courage, and how much prejudice the uncommon in conduct has to reckon with." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Saying, he is gone to lodge with a man that is a sinner.** "It cost Christ something that day to enroll himself as a friend of Zacchæus. The people thought that there must be

8. And Zăc-chæ'-ŭs stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold.

9. And Jesus said unto him, To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

---

a screw loose somewhere — a man is known by the company he keeps. They felt that if he were a prophet he would not have come to Jericho, passing by the leading members of the church in order to be the guest of a tax-collector." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

8. **And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord.** What took place at the dinner we are not told, Luke leaping at once to the main point. Dr. Whyte believed that if no other of Christ's disciples was present, Matthew certainly was there, and the ex-publican must have done much to bring the chief publican to Christ. **Behold, Lord.** Zacchæus speaks solemnly; he was about to make a great dedication. **The half of my goods I give to the poor.** "The change of the man is radical, absolute. An hour ago his work centered in graft, now it centered in giving; his heart centered in hate, now it centered in charity; his life centered in self, now it centered in others." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.* "The Pharisees boasted that they gave a tenth of their goods (would that most of us were Pharisees in that respect!). This man gave a half. They thanked God that they were not as this publican. It would have been a blessed thing for them if they had been." — *Mark Guy Pearse.* **And if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man.** "Zacchæus had been hitherto no extortioner. Had he been conscious that his were in the main treasures of wickedness, it would have been ridiculous to offer as a gift half of them to the poor, before it was seen whether the whole would satisfy the demands of justice. He yet feels that, according to that higher standard of right which he recognizes now, some of his gains may prove to have been unfairly acquired." — *Trench.* **I restore fourfold.** The Hebrew law required a fourtold restitution only in the case of a malicious thief who wantonly destroyed what he had stolen. If the thief was caught with the goods on his person, he was obliged to restore double their value. But if he confessed and voluntarily offered restitution — the case of Zacchæus — he was to give back what he had stolen and only one-fifth more. Thus Zacchæus went far beyond the requirements of the law.

*Illustration.* Regarding the result of his evangelistic meetings D. L. Moody wrote: "There was a man in Brooklyn who said, 'There is a shoemaker's bill I have been owing, and I have owed it for nine years.' So he went around the next day and paid it. The shoemaker said, 'Well, I believe in that kind of meetings now.' He didn't believe in them before."

"Zacchæus struggled with the crowd;
A little man was he.
'Vermin!' he muttered half aloud,
'I'll make them honor me.
Ah, when the taxes next are due,
I'll tower as is meet:
This beggarly, ill-mannered crew
Shall cower at my feet!'

"Zacchæus climbed the sycomore
(He was a little man),
And as he looked the rabble o'er
He chuckled at the plan.
'I get the thing I want,' he said,
'And that is to be tall.
They think me short, but by a head
I rise above them all.'

"'Zacchæus, come! I dine with you,'
The famous Rabbi cried.
Zacchæus tumbled into view
A giant in his pride.
He strutted mightily before
That silly, gaping throng;
You'd think him six feet high or more,
To see him stride along.

"Zacchæus listened to the Lord,
And as he listened, feared:
How was his life a thing abhorred
When that pure Life appeared!
Down to a dwarf he shrank away
In sorrow and in shame.
He owned his sins that very day,
And bore the heavy blame.

"But as he rose before the crowd,
(A little man, alack!)
Confessed his guilt and cried aloud
And gave his plunder back,
I think he stood a giant then
As angels truly scan,
And no one ever thought again
He was a little man."
— *Amos R. Wells,* in *The Sunday School Times.*

9. **And Jesus said unto him, to-day is salvation come to this house.** Our Lord proclaimed a present salvation. It was not in coming years that Zacchæus was to

10. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

be saved, but he was saved at that very instant. "Zacchæus is in our neighborhood, or in our family. Anybody of whom we easily think ill is Zacchæus. Let us try the Christian experiment of thinking well of him: not of his faults, not of his blunders — that is impossible. But let us assure ourselves that Zacchæus is not so bad as he seems, that his innermost motives are right." — *Dean George Hodges.* The Christian, like his Lord, is to win men by believing in their possibilities.

*Illustration.* "Religion was the work of a life with Zacchæus after his heart was changed; but it was not the work of a life to obtain that change of heart. A single tide occupies six hours; but there is a moment when that tide ceases to ebb, and begins to flow. In all great experiences and events there is one decisive moment." — *Nehemiah Adams.*

**Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.** "If Christ's critics had been asked whose son Zacchæus was they would have said that he was 'the son of perdition, the child of the devil.' Our Lord saw something in the little man's soul that convinced him that he belonged to the spiritual family of the father of the faithful. . . . When the average man wants to find proof of the greatness of human nature he talks, of Forth Bridges, and Alpine Tunnels, and Panama Canals, and ocean steamers and aëroplanes, and wireless telegraphs. But the real greatness of humanity consists in the great things Christ ventured to believe concerning it, and the mighty faith he put in it." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

*Illustration.* "There is some giddy, frivolous girl of whom I am told that she thinks of nothing but dress, gayety, silly books, and flirting. I know better. She has serious moments, she has dreams of goodness. And the young man whose life is spent with fast companions, whose thoughts seem never to get above sports, betting, and low indulgences, even he has his solemn moments, when visions of better things float past, and he despises and hates the poor vile thing he is. There are always these two men in every man: the sinner and the son of Abraham." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

10. **For the Son of man.** "How fond our Master was of the sweet title, 'the Son of man'! Jesus Christ called himself the Son of man because he loved to be a man." — *C. H. Spurgeon.* "This is one of the greatest sentences of the New Testament. In it we have sketched for us Jesus' conception of his mission." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.* **Came to seek and to save.** "Christ did not send out a hired man to tell lost sheep that the shepherd was at home and would make them welcome if they should choose to come home. He did not simply advertise his services and put up a standing notice that all are invited or that everybody would be welcome. Sinners never would have come to him if he had not first come to sinners." — *Bishop William F. McDowell.*

"I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
He moved my soul to it Who sought for me;
It was not I that found, O Saviour true;
No, I was found of thee."

"HE CAME. He was not brought, he was not compelled to come. It was of his own free will and choice that he came." — *Rev. Charles F. Deems, D.D.* **That which was lost.** "Of the real and awful meaning of the word 'lost' every man and woman born is the vivid, particular illustration. The lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son or daughter, are illustrations on a lower level. But the awful reality and fact of 'lostness' lies here: I have lost God, and God has lost me." — *Rev. John McNeill, D.D.*

*Illustration.* Robertson compares Christ's work to that of the geologist who pieces together the fragments of the bones of some animal extinct ages ago, until after long and patient toil he reconstructs the lost animal and makes it live again to present-day knowledge. Thus our Lord restores the forgotten spiritual faculties and joys of human lives and we become new beings in him.

*Illustration.* "My old friend, Dr. Duncan, used to say, 'For myself, I cannot always come to Christ direct, but I can always come by *sin*. Sin is the handle by which I get to Christ. I take a verse in which God has put Christ and sin together. I cannot always put my finger upon Christ, and say, "Christ belongs to me." But I can put my finger upon sin, and say, "Sin belongs to me." I take that word, for instance, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Yes, lost — I'm lost. I put my finger upon that word, and say, "I'm the lost one; I'm lost"; and I cry out, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."'" — *C. J. Brown.*

The Great Purpose of Christ. "These are the four equal parts of the unit of the Christian evangel of salvation — Sin ; the God of the loving heart ; the Christ, God's messenger Son sent to recover the lost children ; the re-birth of Christlike lovers and doers of the right. No one of these parts is the whole evangel ; the whole is the sum of the four equal parts." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.*

"Who ever planned a mission as this was planned? Who was ever so true to it?" — *Rev. Julian K. Smyth.*

The great purpose of Christ must be the great purpose of his followers. Every true Christian is an evangelist. But in all his soul-winning it is Christ that wins through him.

*Illustration.* "Mark Guy Pearse, one of the successful soul-seekers, said there are three rules for successful fishing. 'First, keep yourself out of sight. Second, keep yourself further out of sight. Third, keep yourself still further out of sight.' One of the most successful Scotch preachers, Dr. James Denney, has declared that it is impossible for the preacher at the same time to make both the impression of his own cleverness and that Jesus Christ is the Saviour the soul needs. Dr. Charles L. Goodell, a successful winner of men, says, 'He who would preach a crucified Christ must himself be a crucified man.'" — *Rev. J. Frank Smith, D.D.*

All successful evangelistic work is dead in earnest. It expects great things from God and so is bent upon doing great things for God.

*Illustration.* "Think of that story that is told of President Finney. He laid down before the Lord a long list of people for whose conversion he earnestly prayed. He had upon him the passion of desire that they should be saved. He poured out his very soul in eager asking that God would give him the longing of his heart. And he wound up his prayer with this stroke that fairly takes the breath of conventional men : 'And thou knowest, O Lord, that in these matters I am not accustomed to being denied.' No wonder great things happened to him." — *Bishop William F. McDowell.*

"There never yet was a good seeker who did not find. Those who say and who feel, 'Give me souls or I die,' must have souls for their hire." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

The only way that Christianity can win the world is by passing on the great news of salvation from life to life.

*Illustration.* "Once a year, at Easter, the Patriarch of the Greek Church goes down into the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem. Breathless, great crowds await his return. Finally he emerges from the gloom with a lighted torch lighted by the tapers forever burning in that holy place. Eagerly the people press around him to light their torches, and having lighted them, away they go, bearing the sacred flame, throughout the country." — *Rev. Robert F. Coyle, D.D.* Thus the light of Christianity is to spread over the earth.

Sanitation is good, social reform is good, political justice is good, but men are not to be saved by these. "Jesus gave no instruction on hygiene ; he furnished no outline of the ideal scheme of education and culture. He did nothing but that which we think to be very simple, that is, to go about and hunt up bad men and try to love them into goodness ; and yet that is God's plan of rescuing the world, and all the ages will never be able to suggest an improvement on the plan." — *John Rhey Thompson.*

Christian Standards in Business. Zacchæus was tempted "to live satisfied with a low morality. The standard of right and wrong is eternal in the heavens — unchangeably one and the same. But here on earth it is perpetually variable. Trade has its honesty ; which, rightly named, is fraud." — *F. W. Robertson.*

Christianity teaches that all men are brothers. It bids us bear one another's burdens, put others before ourselves, become our brother's keeper. Modern business is competitive rather than coöperative. It looks out for Number 1 first. It sometimes pulls down others ; it does not seek to build them up. Christianity holds that the same principles of good will and mutual helpfulness that hold between man and man in private life hold also in business life.

The Christian standard of wages is not the smallest amount that workers can be forced to take, but the largest amount that the industry can be made to give.

The Christian standard of profits is not the largest dividends that can be wrung from the public and the workers by overcharging, stock watering, cornering the market, and similar trickery, but only a fair and moderate return for the capital and labor involved.

The Christian standard of labor is not the shortest hours and the least and poorest

work that the employers can be forced to accept, but the longest hours and the most and best work possible with a decent regard to health and to home.

The Christian standard of buying is not the lowest price obtainable by beating down and by haunting bargain counters and bankrupt sales, but the payment of fair prices to fair dealers.

Christian business dealings require Christian consciences, and to establish them is a fundamental and urgently important task of the Christian church.

## LESSON VIII (22). — February 25.

## THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS. — Luke 19 : 11–48.

**PRINT vs. 11–26.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.* — LUKE 16 : 10.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 26 : 1–7.
**Reference Material** : Matt. 25 : 14–30 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 13–15.
**Primary Topic** : WORKING FOR JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 19 : 11–26.
**Memory Verse** : Be thou faithful. Rev. 2 : 10.
**Junior Topic** : FAITHFUL AND UNFAITHFUL WORKERS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 19 : 11–26.
**Memory Verse** : Luke 16 : 10.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : THE FIDELITY THAT JESUS EXPECTS.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : WHAT RETURNS DOES CHRIST REQUIRE OF US?

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes.** — Show the pupils a silver dollar or half-dollar. Ask them what they would do to earn money with it and so make it $10 or $5. Then go on to the parable. Cut out of silver paper little " coins " which will represent possessions and abilities that are to be used for Christ, and write on these as the pupils suggest : home, singing, school, cheery words, praise for others, strength, — these are samples of what we are to use for Christ. Give these " coins " to the pupils to take home as souvenirs.

**The Older Classes.** — The teacher may take as the keynote of the lesson the sad fact that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem when he spoke this parable, knowing well what fate awaited him there. Try to make the class realize what we owe to our Saviour, and then ask if there is anything too great for us to do to please him. This lesson shows what he wants of us — that we make full use of the powers and possessions he has given us. Go over the parable, and then discuss the forms of service open to the members of the class and greatly needing to be done.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The last week in March, A.D. 30, one week before Christ's crucifixion.

**Place.** — Jericho, the famous city fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

References to the Herods in this lesson.
Money values in this lesson.
Ancient banking.
The parables of the talents and the pounds compared.
How far is interest on money justifiable ?
Rewards in Christ's kingdom.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Fidelity That Jesus Expects.**

I. THE FAITHFUL SERVANTS, VS. 11–19.
Pounds to trade with.
One pound becomes ten.
One pound becomes five.
Rewards of faithfulness.

II. THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT, VS. 20–27.
Laid up in a napkin.
" Take away the pound."
The enemies slain.
Punishment of unfaithfulness.

III. EXAMPLES OF FAITHFULNESS AND UNFAITHFULNESS, VS. 28–48.
The owner of the colt.
The rejoicing multitude.
The doomed city.
The money-changers in the temple.
Faithful listeners and hostile rulers.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

J. Morgan Gibbon in *The Parables of Jesus.* Glazebrook's *Prospice.* Herrick Johnson's *From Love to Praise.* D'Aubigné's *Discourses and Essays.* Dewhurst's *The Investment of Truth.* Trench on the Parables; also Calderwood, Bruce, Taylor. Banks's *The Christ Dream.* Morrison's *Footsteps of the Flock.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Washburn's *The Beatitudes and Other Sermons.*

11. And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and *because* they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear.

12. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13. And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye *herewith* till I come.

I. **THE FAITHFUL SERVANTS**, vs. 11–19. "The parable of the talents is the story of *genius*. All of the characters were exceptionally gifted. Even the man with one talent stood far above the average. This, on the other hand, is a parable of the common people. While the few who hold talents in their hands are important, the loyalty of the many who have only pounds — the dim, common population — is even more important. And the great object of the parable is to bring home to the people a sense of the tremendous power for good they possess, and their individual responsibility for this power." — *Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon.* In the parable of the talents the money is entrusted to the servants by a householder; in that of the pounds by a nobleman, soon to become a king. It is only a superficial view that fails to see the essential differences in the two parables.

11. **And as they heard these things**. What had just been said to Zacchæus about his salvation and about Christ's mission to the world. **He added and spake a parable**. This is an echo of a Hebrew construction of sentences. **Because he was nigh to Jerusalem**. The capital of the nation, in which Jesus would be most likely to set up his kingdom. Christ was evidently at Jericho. **And because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear**. Christ's wonderful miracles, his immense popularity, and his discourses concerning the kingdom of heaven, had aroused hopes in the multitude, perhaps also in the disciples, that a new deliverer had arisen who would establish a kingdom of the Jews even more glorious than that of Solomon or the more recent Maccabees. "No, it is not immediately to appear; and you are to suffer and to lose your sacred city. But be faithful, keep true to the trust I have committed to you. And at the last, when I come, your eternal reward shall be exceeding great and proportioned to your fidelity." — *Herrick Johnson.* This is the purport of the parable.

12. **He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country**. Doubtless Rome is meant, the maker and destroyer of kings. He was a nobleman, of course; no commoner would aspire to a kingdom. **To receive for himself a kingdom, and to return**. This was doubtless not an uncommon occurrence. "Thus Herod the Great was at first no more than a subordinate officer in Judæa; flying to Rome before Antigonus, he was there declared by the senate, through the influence of Antony, king of the Jews. In like manner his son Archelaus must personally wait upon Augustus before inheriting the dominions left him by his father; and then did not inherit them as king, but only as ethnarch." — *Trench.* Our Lord was in Jericho, near which the palace of this same Archelaus was situated. The parable would be easily understood by his auditors and never forgotten. The disciples did not at the time realize the solemnity of this saying, for their Lord was about to leave them, to receive at the hands of his Father the kingdom of the world which he was so soon to purchase with his own blood.

13. **And he called ten servants of his**. The number of servants implies a large establishment and great wealth. **And gave them ten pounds**. That is, one pound apiece; all had an equal chance. "Behold the source from which you must draw all power and strength; it is Jesus Christ; and it is only by means of what he has given you that you can gain something more." — *D'Aubigné.* The servants had strength of body and of mind, but it was useless for gain without their capital, the pounds. So are all our powers useless for the gain which Christ seeks in us without the measure of grace which he gives freely to each of his servants. Our talents are the special gifts in which we differ from those around us; our pounds are the possessions and opportunities common to all, such as the Word of God and God's Holy Spirit ready to interpret it and aid us in serving him. We are responsible for each of these, both the talents and the pounds. "Mark what a little gift this was. It almost seems unworthy of a king. A talent was a tolerable sum of money — its value was somewhere over $1,000. But a mina (for that is the word for pound in

14. But his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us.

15. And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading.

16. And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more.

17. And he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

---

the original) was only some $15 of our money. But what the nobleman wanted was to find if his followers were really faithful. It is often so much harder to be faithful in the little things than in the great transactions." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* "Archelaus did actually leave money in the charge of some of his servants, especially entrusting Philippus to look after his pecuniary interests in his absence." — *Cambridge Bible.* **And said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I come.** Each was to buy and sell, using his pound as capital, and making as much for his master as possible. "We get the gospel, not, as some of us lazily suppose, in order to secure that we shall not be punished for our past sins whilst we live, and go to heaven when we die. We get it, not only to enjoy its consolations and its sweetness, but to do business with." — *Alexander Maclaren.* The end the nobleman has in view "is not money-making, but character-making, the development in his servants of a hardihood of temper and a firmness of will which can be turned to good account when the obscure traders shall have been transformed into distinguished rulers." — *Prof. A. B. Bruce.*

14. **But his citizens hated him.** His fellow countrymen; in the case of Christ, the Jews, who showed their hatred in so many ways, both toward him and after his ascension toward his disciples. To-day the word applies to all who refuse to own allegiance to Christ and oppose his rule in the earth. In the case of Archelaus, it is no wonder that he was hated for his cruelties. He inaugurated his reign by a terrible massacre of his own subjects. **And sent an ambassage after him.** "It was exactly thus that a faction of the Jews, in the case of Archelaus, sent ambassadors to the court of Augustus to accuse him there, and if possible to hinder his elevation over them." — *Trench.* There were fifty of these ambassadors, and eight thousand more Jews met them on their arrival at Rome. Archelaus was made their ruler for the time, but he was ultimately deposed, partly because of this very incident. **Saying, We will not that this man reign over us.** "Thus does Jesus in most striking parabolic form indicate the intensity and the ineffectiveness of human hatred against God." — *Prof. Henry Calderwood.* Christ's enemies rage against him, but they waste their breath; he is King just the same.

15. **And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom.** The reference is to the second coming of Christ to this earth, in power and glory. **That he commanded these servants . . . to be called to him.** This refers to the great day of final reckoning, when each soul shall give an account of the deeds done in the body. **That he might know what they had gained by trading.** The Greek is a double question: "*Who* had gained *what?*" Note how insistent Christ is everywhere on fruit-bearing, on definite results; not for the sake of the results, which are often very meagre, but because they are the sure index to character.

16. **And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more.** The master must have been away for a long time, for the servant to have made so much. Note that, like all who do the best work, this man was modest. He did not say, "*I* have made ten pounds for you," but "*your pound* has made ten pounds."

17. **And he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant.** Christ knows — no one better — what good service is. He was himself the Servant, so named in the most exalted of the prophecies. We may be sure that he will judge our service accurately and rate it with the appreciation of full understanding and fellow sympathy. **Because thou wast found faithful in a very little.** To so rich a man a pound would seem very little.

18. And the second came, saying, Thy pound, Lord, hath made five pounds.

19. And he said unto him also, Be thou also over five cities.

20. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin:

*Illustration.* Faithfulness in little things, unsparing industry and the mastery of details, are the secrets of success in great things. "Look at the 'Last Judgment' of Michael Angelo, that marvel of power which he painted as if his colossal imagination had obeyed some supernatural guidance; yet the artist spent twelve years in the study of anatomy. The annals of science and letters are full of such instances." — *Rev. E. A. Washburn, D.D.*

**Have thou authority over ten cities.** He receives a Decapolis. "This is what the king has had in view all along — to get capable and trusty governors. A new king needs to take special pains about this. The trial of character through trade is not unsuitable, as governors would have much to do with the provincial revenues." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "Archelaus had actually assigned the government of cities to his adherents who had proved faithful, and this was not an uncommon plan among the Herodian princes. 'We shall also reign with him,' 2 Tim. 2 : 12." — *Cambridge Bible.* The gift is a royal one; the master has become a king. It is a lavish gift, far out of proportion to the service rendered. Thus liberally does Christ reward all that do anything for him.

18. **And the second . . . Thy pound, Lord, hath made five pounds.** Probably the second servant was not so keen a business man as the first; he may not have been so diligent or so conscientious.

19. **Be thou over five cities.** He receives a Pentapolis. Note that this service is rewarded, but not praised. He had done something, but probably he might have done as well as the first servant if he had thrown his whole soul into the task. Christ praises and rewards according to the measure of our fidelity. What an incentive this should be for every Christian!

*Illustration.* "Every man that coöperates in a great work with equal diligence and devotion has an equal place in his eyes. The soldier that clapped Luther on the back as he was going into the Diet of Worms, and said, 'You have a bigger fight to fight than we ever had; cheer up, little monk!' stands on the same level as the great reformer, if what he did was done for the same motive and with as full consecration of himself." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

REWARDS OF FAITHFULNESS. "In the parable of the pounds we find this voice of God: that reward for labor will be exactly proportioned to the quality and the quantity of labor. The blow of the blacksmith tells both ways. It tells on the iron, fitting it for greater profit. It tells on the muscles of his arm — fitting that for profit, too. He gets power while expending power. So it is in the kingdom. They that do the most for God become the most, not arbitrarily, but by an inevitable law. They do, even now and here." — *Herrick Johnson.*

"When all our commonplace things are lit up life will be very radiant. And that is the line of progress in the Christian life." — *Rev. J. H. Jowett, D.D.*

"God asks of us not success but fidelity. Results are his business, ours is to do his will." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

"God recognizes patient merit, and the grandest prizes of all are not kept for the brilliant but for the faithful." — *Rev. William L. Watkinson, D.D.*

II. **THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT,** vs. 20–27. 20. **And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound.** Our Lord does not tell us about seven of the servants. Probably he means us to understand that they also were faithful, but in different degrees, and thus were rewarded. **Which I kept laid up in a napkin.** More exactly, in our terms, a handkerchief. In the companion parable the talent, a vastly larger amount of precious metal, could not be stowed away in a napkin, but was buried in the ground. We lay away our pounds in napkins not only when we misuse any possession or faculty, but when we fail to use it for Christ's kingdom. Selfishness is such a napkin; doubt, fear, distrust, hopelessness, false modesty, cowardice, sloth, worldliness — all these are napkins.

*Illustration.* "The story is told of a certain duke who had a passion for costly diamonds. His house resembled a castle, rather than a mansion, and it was surrounded with a lofty wall over which no one could climb without giving an alarm.

21. For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that which thou layedst not down, and reapest that which thou didst not sow.

22. He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that which I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow;

23. Then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest?

---

His treasure was kept in a safe let into the wall in his bedroom, so that it could not be reached without first awaking or murdering the owner; the safe was so constructed that it could not be forced without discharging four guns and setting an alarm bell ringing in every room. His bedroom, like a prisoner's cell, had but one small window; and the bolt and lock of the massive door were of the stoutest iron. In addition to these precautions, a case containing twelve loaded revolvers stood beside his bed." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.* This is a picture of the selfish way in which many keep their goods and powers for themselves alone.

21. **For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man.** The Greek adjective means first harsh in *flavor*, then harsh in *temper*. **Thou takest up that which thou layedst not down.** The servant dares to accuse his master of profiteering! **And reapest that which thou didst not sow.** This is the most common complaint made against capital by labor: "Look at the ease and luxury of these lords of creation, living off the labors of others!" But if the laborer lays by a little capital, he expects the same results for himself. Indeed, if nothing was done or enjoyed because of accumulated capital, but solely through the immediate working of day laborers, all civilization would revert to primitive barbarism, and the day laborers of the present would suffer no less than the capitalists from the change.

Money-Changers Sitting at Entrance to Temple.

22. **And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.** No sinner needs to be proceeded against by a prosecuting attorney in the court of heaven, but is his own prosecuting attorney, and furnishes all necessary evidence against himself by his words and deeds. **Thou wicked servant.** Failure to do good is here ranked by Christ with the actual doing of evil. **Thou knowest that I am an austere man,** etc. Christ is not admitting this characterization of himself to be true; but, granted its truth, all the more should his servants be faithful — if not from love, then from fear. For he *is* the Lord.

23. **Then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank.** Literally, "the table," that is, the counter of the money-changers, who had many opportunities to increase it as they exchanged for one another the diversified coins of east and west. Our word "bank" similarly is derived from the word "bench." **And I at my coming should have required it with interest?** A story somewhat similar to this is in the Talmud and was familiar to Christ's hearers, but it was radically different in this important respect, that the Talmud story praises and rewards the man who merely kept his money safely, while Christ praises and rewards the man who risked his money, dared to put it out at interest, and so increased it. "The rabbis held that the truth was a sacred tradition to be kept intact and handed down. It was Christ's avowed conviction that the truth, instead of being a treasure to be guarded, is capital to be used." — *Rev. Frederic E. Dewhurst.* Thus also all our powers are to be

24. And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds.

25. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.

26. I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given ; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.

---

ventured out in the world of human service, and not hoarded in the selfish isolation of a monastic life.

*Illustration.* Thus Henry Martyn, that zealous missionary to India and Persia, used his feeble body with untiring energy in his fruitful services. He said nobly. " It is better to wear out than to rust out."

24. **And he said unto them that stood by.** " The angels who never fail to appear and take an active part in scenes descriptive of the final judgment." — *Trench.* **Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds.** Strictly the first servant had eleven pounds, including his original pound. As he was to be ruler of ten cities, the pound would be only a slight present ; but it represented an important principle.

25. **And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.** " They " are some of Christ's audience, addressing our Lord himself in surprise and disapproval. They thought him unjust ; why not give it to the servant with only five pounds, and help to even things up ? Certain men are always wanting to even things up !

26. **I say unto you.** Christ is very emphatic : an evening up of rewards would be an annulment of justice and of grace alike. God will lavish his gifts upon those that lavish their service. **That unto every one that hath shall be given.** This is plainly true of money ; as is often said, " It takes money to make money," and the rich have enormous chances to become richer that the poor do not have. But money is the least of good things, and Christ's saying is just as true of the more important matters, — knowledge, reputation, nobility of character. The right use of any opportunity brings other opportunities. Growth is cumulative, and knowledge increases by geometrical and not merely arithmetical progression. **But from him that hath not.** That is, every one that has made no gains, has accomplished nothing with what he has. **Even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.** He shall be deprived of his unused capital, the capabilities and possessions of which by his sloth he has proved himself to be unworthy. " If the warning seems stern, let us remember that it is the condition of the promise ; we cannot have the one without the other." — *Canon M. G. Glazebrook.*

THE ENEMIES SLAIN. Archelaus, on his return, put to death some of his political opponents, as the king in the parable is represented as doing. " In the story the rebels are killed. But that is not Christ's way. He hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He went, when he had spoken the parable, from Jericho to Jerusalem, and there he encountered all, and more than all, the opposition and cruelty which he had foreshadowed in this parable. The ten forsook him and fled ; the citizens rose in a mass against their King ; but it was the King himself that died. Herod slew his enemies, but ' while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.' " — *Rev J. Morgan Gibbon.*

That was Christ's offered mercy, the beautiful showing forth of his spirit. But the conclusion of this parable presents " his unmitigated wrath against his enemies, — but only *his* enemies exactly as they are enemies of all righteousness, — which shall be revealed in that day when grace shall have come to an end, and judgment without mercy will have begun." — *Trench.*

THE PUNISHMENT OF UNFAITHFULNESS. " The gifts of God are never at home in napkins. We must employ them, if we would enjoy them. It is a commonplace. But it makes all the difference between success and failure here, and between life and death in the eternity." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

*Illustration.* " Christ gives the seed, not to be hoarded in the granary, but to be scattered over the field that it may be multiplied many-fold ; and though it may not seem so at first, yet the keeping of it in the granary is as really a disobedience of him as would be the emptying of it out into the sea." — *William M. Taylor.*

" One little hour for watching with the Master,
Eternal years to walk with him in white;
One little hour to bravely meet disaster,
Eternal years to reign with him in light.

"Then, souls, be brave, and watch until the morrow!
Awake! arise! your lamps of purpose trim;
Your Saviour speaks across the night of sorrow;
Can ye not watch one little hour with him?" — *Jessie H. Brown.*

III. **EXAMPLES OF FAITHFULNESS AND UNFAITHFULNESS**, vs. 28–48. THE OWNER OF THE COLT. The remainder of the chapter tells how Christ, the King, entered his own city triumphantly, and sets forth some illustrations of fidelity in his service, and of the opposite. Note first the promptness with which the owner of the hitherto unused ass's colt let Christ's messengers have the animal when they said, "The Lord hath need of him." With equal readiness the true Christian will give up in Christ's service whatever that service calls for — money, time, thought, ease, safety, even life itself. Our Saviour has given all to us; nothing is too good or too much to give to him.

THE REJOICING MULTITUDE. The giving continued as the Redeemer passed on over the brow of Olivet, down the western road, and through the gates of Jerusalem. Some yielded their outer garments, throwing them into the road for Jesus to ride over. Some furnished leafy branches to carpet the way. All the disciples, a great multitude of rejoicing men and women and children, gave eagerly what pleased Jesus most of all, their shouts of praise and thanksgiving to God. The Christian's fidelity is shown by the spiritual attitude, his peace and joy and gratitude, quite as much as by the deeds he performs in Christ's service.

THE DOOMED CITY. Thus the King had some faithful subjects; but, alas! he knew that his city, on the whole, would be untrue to him. One of the saddest scenes in all history is Christ's weeping over Jerusalem. Hostile to him, he saw it given over to its enemies. Visited by mercy and love which it rejected, it would be visited by hatred and cruelty which it could not reject. The coming doom of Jerusalem was a fearful picture of the result of all faithlessness.

THE MONEY-CHANGERS IN THE TEMPLE. At the beginning of his ministry Christ had driven from the temple the crowd of noisy money-changers and huckstering dealers in animals for sacrifice which were defiling the sacred precincts. They were back again, however, as they always do come back unless God's people are watchful and bold against them. They were the faithless company of men who were untrue to their wonderful opportunities, blind to the holy influences of the spot, and living only for the selfish ends of greed. As the indignant Messiah drove them headlong out of his house, we may see in the act a clear indication of the fate of all who are faithless to the best and live for lower aims: they are driven out of the palace of God's peace and power, and become miserable exiles from the kingdom of heaven.

FAITHFUL LISTENERS AND HOSTILE RULERS. The chapter closes with a brief paragraph which sets in sharp contrast the two classes whom we have been studying throughout. We see the common people hearing him gladly and attentively every day as he taught in the temple, and over against this faithful crowd we see the rulers watching him suspiciously, jealous of his influence over the multitude, and plotting ways of destroying him. In many forms these two parties have continued from that day to this, and will continue till the last great and terrible day of judgment. If we are not with the one, we are with the other. Whoever is not for Christ is against him.

## LESSON IX (23). — March 4.

## JESUS TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE. — Luke 20 : 1—21 : 38.

**PRINT Luke 20 : 19–26; 21 : 1–4.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.*** — LUKE 20 : 25.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 2.
**Reference Material** : Isa. 28 : 14–20; Matt. 7 : 28, 29; Acts 4 : 7–22; Rom. 13 : 1–7.
**Primary Topic** : A GIFT THAT PLEASED JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 21 : 1–4.
**Memory Verse** : It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20 : 35.
**Junior Topic** : THE WIDOW AND HER TWO MITES.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 21 : 1–4.
**Memory Verse** : Acts 20 : 35.

**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Jesus the Fearless Teacher.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Jesus Answering His Opposers.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will confine themselves to the story of the widow and her two mites, and will find it a lesson not only in giving generously, but, far more, in the dedication of their entire lives to God. They are not too young to take that great step, and to bring it about may well be the teacher's chief aim in this lesson. To arouse interest the teacher may bring to the class the tiny three-cent piece formerly coined by the United States : the mite was one-twenty-fourth of the value of that!

**The Older Classes** will study the entire two chapters of Luke, having especially in view the picture these chapters give of the militant side of our Lord, and making it all an inspiration to a more vigorous type of Christianity. To this end assign the eight subdivisions of the chapters to eight pupils, asking each to do three things : tell the story, tell what light it throws on the character of Christ, tell what lesson for us is contained in the incident. Emphasize chiefly the teachings regarding generous giving and entire consecration illustrated both by the tribute money and by the widow's mite.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30, three days before the crucifixion.

**Place.** — The temple at Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Who were the Sadducees?
Who were the Herodians?
An outline of Jewish and Roman coinage.
How far should our obedience to the civil government go?
What should be the measure of our gifts to God?
Christ as a controversialist.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Jesus the Fearless Teacher.**

I. Strong Answers to Opponents, Luke 20.
   - A question of authority.
   - A question of rejection.
   - A question of tribute.
   - A question of heaven.

II. Wise Instruction for Disciples, Luke 21.
   - A lesson in sacrifice.
   - A lesson in patience.
   - A lesson in faith.
   - A lesson in watchfulness.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ and the Tribute Money, by Liberale da Verona (Siena), Titian (Dresden — said to be the most perfect of Titian's pictures), Rubens (Louvre), Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Bida, Copley.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Dawson's *The Reproach of Christ.* Kingsley's *All Saints' Day.* Black's "*According to My Gospel.*" Washburn's *The Beatitudes and Other Sermons.* Collyer's *The Life That Now Is.* McNeill's *Sermons, Vol. 2.* Baring-Gould's *The Sunday Round, Vol. 2.* Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark.* Trench's *Brief Thoughts and Meditations.* Wright's *The Heart of the Master.* Hodges's *The Heresy of Cain.* Stanley's *Canterbury Sermons.* King's *Christianity and Humanity.* Wayland's *University Sermons.* Potter's *Sermons of the City.* Odenheimer's *Sermons.* Brady's *The Love Test.* H. N. Grimley in *Church Reader for Lent.* J. W. Bancroft in *Sermons on the Gospels, Trinity to Advent.*

I. **STRONG ANSWERS TO OPPONENTS**, Luke 20. A Question of Authority. The purification of the temple brought upon Jesus the active hostility of the Sanhedrin, and representatives of that council waited upon Jesus and demanded his authority for public teaching. Had he been ordained a priest? Had he received the diploma of a rabbi? If a prophet, could he prove it by working a miracle?

With masterful readiness Jesus flung at them this counter question: "How about John the Baptist? He bore witness to me; he came before me and you should have decided long ago in regard to his authority. Was it human or divine?"

This question was entirely relevant, for if they could not pass upon John the Baptist, they could not pass upon Jesus. And they dared not express their belief that John was an impostor, fearing that the people, who believed thoroughly in John, would in one of their wild bursts of fanaticism stone them to death. Nor could they admit that John's preaching was of God, for Jesus would at once turn on them with the question: "Then why did you not believe him and follow him?" And so, after consulting together, they gave the ignominious reply, "We do not know." "Then," answered Jesus with entire fitness, "if you cannot decide in regard to the authority of my predecessor and herald, I will not allow you to pass upon my authority." The examination could go no further, and the discomfited ecclesiastics withdrew, more determined than ever to put Jesus out of the way.

19. And the scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him in that very hour; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he spake this parable against them.

20. And they watched him, and sent forth spies, who feigned themselves to be righteous, that they might take hold of his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor.

21. And they asked him, saying, Teacher, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, and acceptest not the person *of any*, but of a truth teachest the way of God:

A QUESTION OF REJECTION. Turning to the people, but still in the hearing of the scribes and other members of the Sanhedrin, our Lord spoke three condemnatory parables: that of the Two Sons (Matt. 21 : 28–32), that of the Marriage of the King's Son (Matt. 22 : 1–14), and between the two that of the Laborers in the Vineyard, which alone is recorded by Luke.

The vineyard of the parable represents Palestine, the symbols of which on the coins of the Maccabæan rulers were vines, grapes, and vine leaves. The owner of the vineyard was God, who went away "for a long time" — the two thousand years of troubled and faithless Jewish history. The servants whom he sent seeking fruit from his vineyard were the judges, the priests that were true to him, and the prophets; and the cruelties and disobedience of the Jews toward their religious leaders are the outstanding characteristics of their history.

Then God sent his beloved Son, whom the husbandmen killed, with the result that they were destroyed by the angry Owner, and the vineyard handed over to others. This is the saddest of all the parables. How it must have wrung the heart of Jesus to speak it! He told the terrible story in the hope that the warning might be heeded, and the parable not be prophetic; but, alas! the warning was scouted, and the prophecy of the parable was fulfilled in every particular.

A QUESTION OF TRIBUTE. 19. **And the scribes and the chief priests.** The scribes wrote out the copies of the law, preserved it, and taught it to the people. "The chief priests were the officiating high priest, former high priests still alive, and members of their families." — *Davis's Bible Dictionary.* **Sought to lay hands on him in that very hour.** The three parables which Jesus had just spoken were plainly directed against that very class, the leaders of the people. **And they feared the people.** "The *and* is in effect equal to *but*." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **For they perceived that he spake this parable against them.** "They" refers not to the people but to the scribes and chief priests, who were acute enough to see that the parables had been directed against themselves.

Scribe's Inkstand and a Reed Pen.

20. **And they watched him, and sent forth spies.** The Greek verb "watched" "means to watch carefully or closely, as one who dogs another's steps." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* They watched both in person and by proxy. **Who feigned themselves to be righteous.** Matt. 22 : 16 says that these spies were the pupils of the scribes, who passed themselves off as men earnestly seeking light on spiritual matters. **That they might take hold of his speech.** They did not seek, as true inquirers should, that his speech might take hold of *them.* They were *captious* (from the Latin, meaning "take hold of") critics. **So as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor.** The Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, alone had the power of capital punishment, and these plotters sought nothing short of Christ's life. Matthew tells us that in this plot the priests and scribes united with the Herodians, the party in favor with the Romans.

21. **And they asked him, saying, Teacher.** With their first word they put themselves in the position of lowly and honest inquirers. **We know that thou sayest and teachest rightly.** "Christ's enemies introduced the question with flattery about his well-known probity and truthfulness and fearlessness, a sop thrown to the watchman

22. Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?
23. But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them,
24. Show me a denarius. Whose image and superscription hath it? And they said, Cæsar's.

to get entrance into the citadel — a Judas kiss before the treachery." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.* **And acceptest not the person of any.** This was a testimony to Christ's independence, intended to spur him on to defy even the highest officers of the state by some seditious remark. **But of a truth teachest the way of God.** "There is something in this fawning malice, and treacherous flattery, almost as repulsive as the kiss of Judas." — *F. W. Farrar.*

22. **Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?** They could not have asked a question fuller of peril to Christ. "Nothing aroused in the Jew such bitter feeling as the Roman principle of taxation, and hence the rancorous contempt recorded in the Gospels of the average Jew for tax-gatherers. Already there had been violent insurrections against the paying of tribute, and even among calm and thoughtful Jews the feeling ran so high that the money in the public treasury was accounted stolen money. The Jew, trained in the idea of a perfect theocracy, had no notion of the state as such, and to pay tax to a secular power was to put that power in the place of God, and was virtually an act of atheism." — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.* The dilemma in which this shrewd question sought to place Christ was this: If he approved the payment of taxes to the Romans, he threw away all chance of being accepted by the Jews as the Messiah; if he condemned such payment, he declared himself an enemy of Rome and a revolutionary. The same problem is constantly arising, and always has confronted Christians. Are bad men to be obeyed when they get into office? How far shall we submit to a government when it passes evil laws? If the nation does not acknowledge God, should a Christian have anything to do with it? Should a follower of the Prince of Peace submit to the draft in war times? Should a Christian pay taxes to support an entirely secular system of education? Questions like these often arise to perplex Christians seriously, and send them to Christ for an answer.

Roman Denarius.

23. **But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them.** "Judas the Gaulanite, a zealot leader, had raised an insurrection on this very question in A.D. 6. The attempt is to suggest to Pilate that Jesus is a similar insurgent leader." — *New Century Bible.*

24. **Show me a denarius.** The Roman denarius was a silver coin between the sizes of our quarter-dollar and ten-cent piece. It was worth about fifteen cents, but was a day's wage for a common laborer. "It may still be seen, — the little silver coin bearing on its surface the head encircled with a wreath of laurel and bound around with the sacred fillet — the well-known features, the most beautiful and the most wicked, even in outward expression, of all the Roman emperors — with the superscription running round, in the stately language of Imperial Rome, *Tiberius Caesar, divi Augusti filius Augustus, Imperator.*" — *Dean Stanley.* Mark 12:15, 16 implies that they had to go to a money-changer's table to borrow the denarius. It was a heathen coin, and the Jews would carry only Jewish coins in their girdles. **Whose image and superscription hath it?** Unless it was an old coin, it would bear the head and titles of the reigning emperor, Tiberius. Out of respect to the scruples of the Jews, whose coins bore no images, the Romans provided for Palestine coins without images; but Herod Philip, desiring to flatter Tiberius, had coins made with the emperor's head on them.

*Illustration.* "If the eye could foresee what coins would go on missions of mercy, would strengthen the interests of truth, would put wings on good ideas, would endow beneficent institutions with new power, would carry sympathy and help to the bed of some poor sufferer, kindle a fire upon the desolate hearth, spread a meal upon the table of destitution, clothe a pallid and shivering child, or give it some training of mind or heart, — those, a man might say, are the Christian coins. The form of Christ is really stamped upon that silver and gold, and his superscription, 'It is more

25. And he said unto them, Then render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

26. And they were not able to take hold of the saying before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

---

blessed to give than to receive,' enwreathes his image with immortal truth." — *T. Starr King.*

**And they said, Cæsar's.** Cæsar (in German, *Kaiser*) was the general title of all the Roman emperors.

25. **And he said unto them, Then render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.** "Christianity is a social religion. It is impossible to practise it unless we enter into the company of others." — *Dean George Hodges, D.D.* "The image and superscription told them with indisputable clearness to what government they owed allegiance, and to what great power they owed the unexampled peace which had now for thirty years reigned through the civilized world." — *Dean Stanley.* "In all departments of life the influence of the gospel is on the side of energy, honesty, and stern integrity. If you look to civil relations, the principle of the text inculcates loyalty and patriotism." — *Bishop Odenheimer.* **And unto God the things that are God's.** "Whatever the Cæsar of the hour may require us to render to him, what we are bound to render to God remains the same." — *Charles Kingsley.* This second clause of Christ's saying is the supreme one whenever the two come into conflict. "God is above Cæsar; nay, if we render to Cæsar it is because we render to God." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.* "We may be confident that, in obeying God, we shall never violate any duty which we owe to the magistracy, for if the magistracy command us to disobey God, it has transcended its proper powers, its commands are of no authority, and a Christian must not obey them." — *Francis Wayland.* "Pay your taxes, obey the laws, honor the civil authorities; but that you may do so, begin by paying your taxes to God. The penny bears an image; so do you. The penny is from the mint of the emperor; you are from the mint of God. You are God's child. You bear his image. Render to him your supreme and unceasing tribute; and in doing that, all other and minor questions will settle themselves." — *Bishop Henry C. Potter.*

*Illustration.* "Undo the fact that you are Christians you cannot. To all eternity the stamp is on you. Do not suffer your Christian character to be blurred over, as a coin may be defaced. Have you seen silver or gold brought in contact with a drop of quicksilver? At once the precious metal sucks up the mercury and loses its brilliancy and its ring and its value. To restore it the coin must be subjected to intense heat, which will melt the base metal out. Now we, brought into contact with evil, may take it into us, and it will injure us; we shall no longer have the ring and aspect of Christians. To be restored we must pass through the fire of repentance, and burn out the evil we have allowed to penetrate into us." — *S. Baring-Gould.*

26. **And they were not able to take hold of the saying before the people.** "Yet these hypocrites dared to shout three days afterwards that Jesus 'had forbidden to give tribute to Cæsar'!" — *Farrar.* **And they marvelled at his answer.** "Never was there a more complete capture of an inquisitorial body by the one they hoped to confute. They were brilliant enough themselves, as is shown from the trap in which they had tried to inveigle him, to appreciate the answer. They marveled, therefore, yet they left him and went their way. That is the sadness of it!" — *Cyrus Townsend Brady.* **And held their peace.** But only for the time. They continued to talk against Jesus in their secret plotting, and were ready to seize the first chance of slandering him openly.

A QUESTION OF HEAVEN. The Pharisees and the Herodians had in turn attempted to confound Jesus with their questions and had been put to rout. Next came the Sadducees, wealthy and powerful office-holders, cynical and worldly and up to this time taking little note of the humble Nazarene. One of their doctrines was a denial of the resurrection, and one of their stock arguments was the problem of the seven brothers, each of whom in turn married the same woman, according to a law of Moses (Deut. 23:4) which called upon a brother to marry his dead brother's widow, if she should be childless. The Sadducees sought to ridicule the resurrection by asking whose wife she would be in the future life. The Pharisees were in the habit of answering, "The first brother's"; but Christ made the authoritative reply that there is no marrying in heaven. Moreover, he went on to give a new and con-

Luke 21 : 1. And he looked up, and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury.

2. And he saw a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

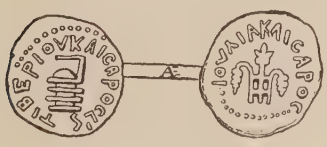
3. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all:

clusive proof of the immortality of the soul drawn from the only part of the Bible which the Sadducees accepted wholly and heartily, the law of Moses. So complete was Christ's victory that it won the praise even of some of the scribes, and drove his enemies into utter and abashed silence.

II. **WISE INSTRUCTION FOR DISCIPLES**, Luke 21. A Lesson in Sacrifice. 1. **And he looked up.** Our Lord had been making a fiery address, full of indignation, a stern prophesying of judgment. "Then he seems to have retired, partly, perhaps, to allow his human agitation to subside. He went back and sat down in the court of the temple called 'the Court of the Women,' one of the principal features of which was that the collecting-boxes, as we might say, were placed along one side. Thirteen large chests called 'Shopheroth,' because of their trumpet-shaped openings, were there; and the people thronged through the Court of the Women, passing up thence by fourteen steps into the Court of the Men. Our Lord sat down in that outer vestibule to rest himself, and then and there this incident happened." — *Rev. John McNeill.* **And saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury.** "Each receptacle bore an inscription stating the purpose for which its contents would be used. In making these contributions there was a peculiar temptation to display, for no one was allowed to carry his offering across the court in purse or girdle; it must be held in the hand." — *William Burnet Wright.*

The Widow's Mite. Bida.

2. **And he saw a certain poor widow.** Note again our Lord's tender interest in widows, and remember that doubtless his mother had been a widow for many years. **Casting in thither two mites.** This mite (the *lepton* or *prutah*) was the smallest coin current; and two of them was the least gift the Jewish rabbis allowed to be offered in the temple. It was worth about one-eighth of a cent. "Sometimes one hears this expression, 'I will give my mite.' Will you? Well, we shall have a big collection to-day if you do. Why, my friends, the mite is the mighty thing — the mite is *all*." — *Rev. John McNeill.* "What am I before God but just two mites; a body and a soul — mere mites as regards his great infinitude. How happy I would be if I could give unreservedly my two mites to God, according to his right in them and claim upon them." — *Bishop Hall.*



Widow's Mite (actual size).

3. **And he said, Of a truth I say unto you.** See what arouses Christ's special admiration and draws forth his most emphatic expression of approval! **This poor widow cast in more than they all.** "It is a plain standard of value he gives. In proportion to the capacity of the giver, the talents were little but the mites much. The standard is not the quantity, but the quality. In a word, the Lord would say that the pure religion of God was better served when his treasury was supplied by the whole-hearted doers than the half-hearted doers." — *Rev. E. A. Washburn, D.D.* "The large-hearted poor must be sometimes grieved that they have comparatively so little to render back to him from whom every good thing they possess has come.

4. For all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had.

But let them note for how much their little, if rightly offered, may stand, and how different the arithmetic of heaven from the arithmetic of earth." — *Archbishop Trench.*

4. **For all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts.** "All the rest have many wants, and when they have satisfied their wants they give of that which is over to their God. That poor woman has no wants at all, except the great want — her God. And therefore, without any embarrassment, she has been able to give him all that she had, and to leave herself in the happy destitution of a believer." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* **But she of her want did cast in all the living that she had.** "She cannot have had the faintest suspicion that her gift would be remembered five minutes after it was given; and yet here it is, in its bare poverty, outshining the most generous giving the world has ever known. When the Gospels had to be written, this must go in. It could no more be left out than the great historic ruby can be left out of the English crown. Then the Gospels began to be read in distant places. Greece got them, and Rome, and Egypt, and Spain, Britain, and France, and Germany, and wherever they went the woman went, standing in the splendor of the divine words, so millions at last saw what was seen at first by two or three, and still the glory grew: your fathers and mine, so long as we can trace them, saw what we see; and when we are dead and gone, our children will still see the widow standing with her two mites casting them into the store of the Lord, and then going back to her home and beginning again, perhaps, to save two mites more." — *Robert Collyer.*

"As one said, 'Give until you feel it; give until you wince; give until it comes to the "quick"; give until it is like something run in under the nail; something that makes you say, "Ah! can I?"' and then, keep on giving until you do not feel; till you get hardened, so to speak; till true, honest giving of your substance to God becomes use and second nature." — *Rev. John McNeill.*

*Illustration.* William Burnet Wright beautifully illustrates the true spirit of giving by the story of a Presbyterian elder who for many years had given annually many thousands to the denominational boards, but suddenly became poor through paying the debts of another, debts for which he was not legally responsible but felt himself morally responsible. The collecting agent for a cause to which he had long given a thousand dollars a year called upon him simply as an old friend and made no allusion to money; but as the agent started to go the aged Christian said, "You must not deny me the privilege of giving because I can no longer give much," and without a sign of humiliation handed his visitor a silver half-dollar.

A LESSON IN PATIENCE. Seemingly on the same day our Lord was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, probably as its walls glittered in the rays of the setting sun. As one of his apostles spoke of the rich beauty of the splendid edifice, Jesus sadly foretold the destruction which was soon to come upon that wonder of the world. Then, with the spirit of prophecy strong upon him, he foretold the many sorrows that were to befall the earth: wars and commotions, nations arrayed against nations, great earthquakes, famines and pestilences, fearful appearances in the skies; all this in the world at large, and for themselves their betrayal by friends and brethren and even parents, their persecution, imprisonment, and execution. But in it all their Father would watch over them. Not a hair of their heads should perish outside his providence, without his loving care, or before the time he appointed. "In your patience," said Christ, "ye shall win your souls." Their steady and trusting endurance would preserve their souls, their true lives, though all else should perish. How often, through all these troubled centuries, have Christians needed to heed this lesson!

A LESSON IN FAITH. Our Lord continued his prophecy of the coming woe with a more particular foreshadowing of the approaching siege and destruction of Jerusalem, which would make manifest God's anger with the wicked people that had so long defied him, and that would have added the final sin of slaying God's own Son. "Jerusalem," Christ foretold, "shall be trodden down of the Gentiles." This prophecy was terribly fulfilled. The "Zionism" of the present day affords the first glimmer of hope that the Jews may one day rule again over their Holy City; but if they do, it must be with the protection of the Gentiles.

In all these world-changing events Christ exhorted his followers to maintain their faith. Though all the world might be enslaved, their redemption was near at hand.

Though kingdoms might fall and civilizations pass away, Christ's words should not pass away. Two thousand years of Christianity have proved this true.

A LESSON IN WATCHFULNESS. But though Christ's followers are to trust in his promises, they are not to relax their guard against the evil without and within. Christ's closing word was an exhortation to watch as well as pray. The cares and pleasures of the world set their traps for Christians as well as worldlings. Nothing but constant vigilance can keep us out of the snares. What if Christ should return to earth — as he surely will some day — and find us held fast in some one of these traps! The Christian's life should be one of earnest supplication, that he may be true in all these testings, and prepared at any time to "stand before the Son of man."

## LESSON X (24). — March 11.

## JESUS IN GETHSEMANE. — Luke 22.

**PRINT vs. 39–48, 54.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God.* — 1 PET. 3 : 18.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 22 : 1–8.
**Reference Material** : Matt. 4 : 1–11 ; 26 : 36–46 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 13 ; Heb. 4 : 15, 16 ; Jas. 1 : 2–6.
**Primary Topic** : AN ANGEL HELPS JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 22 : 39–48, 54.
**Memory Verse** : He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. Ps. 91 : 11.
**Junior Topic** : JESUS PRAYS FOR STRENGTH.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 22 : 39–54.
**Memory Verse** : Luke 22 : 43.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : HOW TO STAND THE HARDEST TEST.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : SUBMISSION TO THE FATHER'S WILL.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** are to be led to think of angels, and how they help us in time of trouble, and the teacher will not dwell on Christ's agony and bloody sweat. Picture the angel's ministries to Christ's worn body and sad soul, and then ask the pupils to tell of some troubles that may come to them, and of how the angels may help them bear those troubles.

**The Older Classes** will make this a lesson in prayer. The teacher may take it for granted that every one knows the meaning of Gethsemane. Even young people have sorrows which are as deep for them as those of adults are for them. The great lesson of Gethsemane is that Christ has experienced every sorrow that can come to us, and far more. He knows how to save us in and from them all. Aim in this lesson to lead your pupils into true communion with him.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was before midnight, Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30. The trials before the Jewish authorities were from 1 to 5 A.M. of the following day.

**Place.** — The Garden of Gethsemane, on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, and the high priest's house in Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The object of the Lord's supper.
The cause of Christ's agony in Gethsemane.
Temptation and prayer.
Christ's teachings about the will of God.
Modern Judases.
Peter's denial and its like to-day.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Submission to the Father's Will.**

I. IN THE UPPER ROOM, vs. 1–38.
The treachery of Judas.
Preparations for the passover.
The Lord's supper.

II. IN THE GARDEN, vs. 39–53.
The bitter cup.
The sleeping disciples.
The kiss of Judas.
The sword of Peter.

III. IN THE HIGH PRIEST'S HOUSE, vs. 54–71.
Peter's denial.
The first trial of Jesus.
The second trial of Jesus.
Jesus condemned by his own people.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The Lord's Supper is represented in the world's greatest painting, by Leonardo da Vinci (Milan); also by Andrea del Sarto (Florence), Ghirlandajo (Florence), Cosimo Roselli (Sistine Chapel), Tintoretto (Venice), Holbein (Basle), von Gebhardt, Fritz von Uhde, etc. Christ in Gethsemane, by Giotto (Florence), Bellini (London), Perugino (Florence), Dürer, Murillo (Louvre), Correggio (Apsley House), Tintoretto (Venice), Bida, Doré, Overbeck, Tissot, etc. The Betrayal, by Giotto (Padua), Duccio (Siena), Ghiberti (Florence), Fra Angelico (Florence), Dürer, Van Dyck (Madrid), Hofmann (Darmstadt), Ary Scheffer.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Berle's *Modern Interpretations of the Gospel Life.* Bushnell's *Christ and His Salvation.* Robinson's *Studies in the New Testament.* Sears's *Sermons and Songs.* Vaughan's *The Prayers of Jesus Christ.* Lorimer's *The Galilean.* Lefroy's *Agoniæ Christi.* Watkinson's *Studies in Christian Character, Second Series.* Jowett's *The Silver Lining.* Aitken's *Eastertide.* Wright's *The Heart of the Master.* Jones's *The Inner Circle.* Trench's *Brief Thoughts and Meditations.* Dawson's *The Evangelistic Note.* Phillips Brooks's *Sermons for the Church Year.* Power's *The "I Wills" of Christ.* Burrell's *The Spirit of the Age.* Dawson's *Sermons on Disputed Points.* MacArthur's *Calvary Pulpit.* Park's *Discourses.* Beecher's *Sermons, Vol. III.* South's *Sermons, Vol. III.* Horton's *The Commandments of Jesus* and *The Cartoons of St. Mark.* Phelps's *The Still Hour.* Swanson's *Gethsemane.* Hartzell's *Sin and Our Saviour.* Farrar's *Everyday Christian Life.* Brand's *Sermons from a College Pulpit.* Trench's *Westminster Sermons.* Knight's *The Master's Questions.* Black's *The Evening and the Morning.* Robertson's *Sermons, Second* and *Fifth Series.* Stuart's *Children of God.*

**I. IN THE UPPER ROOM**, vs. 1–38. THE TREACHERY OF JUDAS. We have reached the beginning of the world's most terrible tragedy. Satan appears on the scene. From the outset, from the forty days of temptation in the wilderness, our Lord had been contending with the Adversary. Now the arch-fiend was ready for his final effort.

Satan's tools were ready. There were the Pharisees, the popular leaders, enraged at Christ's abounding influence over the people and his bold condemnation of Pharisaic hypocrisy. There were the Sadducees, stung out of their cynical indifference by Christ's superior wisdom. There were the Herodians, fearfully anticipating another uprising of the Jews, with Jesus to lead them. There were the high priests, fanatical, cruel, ready for any infamy. There was Pilate, the Roman governor, weak, vacillating, and politic, caring nought for justice if only he could hold his office. Last of all, and most shameful of all, there was Judas Iscariot.

Here was one of the chosen disciples of Jesus, the inner circle honored above all the world. For three years he had listened to the Saviour's wisdom, witnessed his wonderful miracles, felt the heart-beat of his love, and yet, at this supreme crisis, he could join with his Lord's enemies in plotting his death, and all for thirty shekels of silver, about nineteen dollars, the price of the meanest slave. "On one side of these shekels would be stamped the olive-branch, the emblem of peace; on the obverse the censer, the type of prayer, with the inscription, 'Jerusalem the Holy'!" — *F. W. Farrar.* "Satan entered into Judas," Luke's account reads; and surely nothing less than Satanic possession could cause such treachery as his. The bargain made by Judas with the priests was that he would deliver Jesus to them without a mob, which above all things they feared.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE PASSOVER. Our Lord had been in retirement. Because of the hostility of all the parties of the Jews he had ceased his daily teaching in the temple, lest the plots against him should come to a climax before his time; for the Lamb of God should be offered up at the passover. He had been resting quietly in Bethany with the beloved household, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and it is delightful to think of this time of peace before the storm and the agony.

Then came the day of unleavened bread, Thursday, the thirteenth of the month Nisan, on the afternoon of which the Jews carefully removed all yeast from their homes. Keeping his preparations for the sacred feast secret because of his enemies, and especially because of Judas, Christ sent the faithful Peter and John on a mysterious errand. They were to meet in Jerusalem a man bearing a pitcher of water — an unusual sight, for in Palestine the water-carrying is done by the women. Some think that this man was Mark, for the water with which the unleavened bread of the passover was mixed was drawn by the master of the house, and the upper room in which Christ observed the passover was probably in the home of Mary, Mark's mother.

Having found this water-carrier, and followed him to his house, Peter and John made arrangements for the use of a large upper room, furnished with divans, cushions, and low tables, where the passover might be observed by Christ and his disciples. This is the room, in all probability, where the risen Christ appeared on two occasions to the disciples, and where the descent of the Holy Spirit occurred at Pentecost.

THE LORD'S SUPPER. The Jews observed the passover between three and six o'clock in the afternoon, and doubtless Jesus chose the latest hour possible, in order

39. And he came out, and went, as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him.

40. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

to escape notice. All twelve disciples were present, Judas not wishing to attract attention to his movements by his absence. After the meal, however, — or, as some think, before the ordinance of the Lord's supper was established, — Jesus let Judas (and John) know that he knew of the contemplated treachery, and Judas left the room, sadly bidden by his Lord to do his foul deed quickly.

In other ways also the terrible fact of sin was apparent at the Last Supper. There was the wretched quarrel over precedence, certain disciples probably seeking for the

Christ Washes the Disciples' Feet. Bida.

chief places at the tables, and all of them refusing to assume the servant's place and wash the dusty feet of the company, looking on ashamed while the Lord of heaven and earth performed this lowly service. There was also the warning to Peter of his coming denial of his Lord.

II. **IN THE GARDEN**, vs. 39–53. Christ has now reached the supreme struggle of his life on earth. "There is nothing, perhaps, in the whole history of our Lord's sufferings which so brings home to us the depth and reality of those sufferings as the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane." — *Trench.* "The crowning feature of this whole scene is plainly the submission, or self-surrender of Jesus, to the will of God the Father." — *Rev. James Brand.*

39. **And he came out.** Leaving the home of Mary and Mark, the "upper room." "The walk would be under the full Paschal moon amid the deep hush that falls over an Oriental city at night." — *F. W. Farrar.* The little company probably left the city by the Fish Gate, now called St. Stephen's Gate, in the eastern wall. **And went, as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives.** The lower slope, about half a mile from Jerusalem. **And the disciples also followed him.** The eleven, Judas having withdrawn on his evil errand. Bidding eight of the disciples lie down and sleep, our Lord took the three that were closest to him, Peter, James, and John, who alone had been with him when he raised from death the daughter of Jaïrus and again on the Mount of Transfiguration, and with them went deeper into the shade of the olive-trees. "During the earthly ministry of Jesus the Inner Circle was small. In these days of his spiritual ministry the Inner Circle is still small. And it is small because most Christians are contented with meagre spiritual attainments and mere nominal membership in some church." — *Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones.*

40. **And when he was at the place.** The word translated "place" may signify a small farm. It was called "Gethsemane," meaning "oil-press." The present

41. And he was parted from them about a stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed,

42. Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

garden of that name is about three-quarters of a mile from the wall of the city, the traveller going down into the valley of the Kedron and then up the green slopes of the Mount of Olives. Gethsemane probably belonged to a disciple, and possibly to Mark. The sacred spot is still preserved with reverent care by the monks, and is marked by some very old olive-trees. "In spite of all the doubts that can be raised against their antiquity, the eight aged olive-trees will remain, as long as their already protracted life is spared, the most venerable of their race on the surface of the earth. Their gnarled trunks and scanty foliage will always be regarded as the most affecting of the sacred memorials in or about Jerusalem." — *Dean Stanley.*

Old Olive-trees in the Garden of Gethsemane.

**He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.** "*Watch* and pray," it is given in Matthew. "There is no commandment of Jesus which seems to be more frequently on his lips than this: Watch." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* We are to watch against the temptations that we know are likely to assail us.

*Illustration.* "If a fort is situated so that the weakest side is on the east, the commander, if he is wise, will set his watch there. But suppose the commander of a fort whose weak place was on the west side should put all his force on the east side!" — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

41. **And he was parted from them about a stone's cast.** The Greek verb is literally, "he was taken away" or "torn away," implying Christ's extreme reluctance to leave the human sympathy and support of the three disciples, and pass through his darkest hour alone. **And he kneeled down and prayed.** "What is prayer? To connect every thought with the thought of God. To look on everything as his work and his appointment. To submit every thought, wish, and resolve to him. To feel his presence, so that it shall restrain us even in our wildest joy. That is prayer." — *Frederick W. Robertson.*

42. **Saying, Father, if thou be willing.** A child talking to his Father — that is the right attitude of prayer. Entire readiness for whatever the Father thinks best — that is the right spirit of prayer. **Remove this cup from me.** "The figurative term 'cup,' according to Scripture usage, denotes bitter afflictions and unmitigated penalties. 'Upon the wicked,' it is written, 'he shall rain snares, fires, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.' Jerusalem was to be 'a cup of trembling' to the surrounding nations." — *Rev. George C. Lorimer, D.D.* "It was not the cross from which the prayer of the agony sought his deliverance. It was from a thing worse than death to the holy soul of the God-Man. It was from that 'hour,' then beginning, of the conscious sin-bearing and sin-becoming; the conscious incorporation of the Sinless with the sinner in his sin; the having the powers of evil so near that the very breath of the enemy should be on the face and in the ear of the dying One, and God seemingly set afar off by the other presence with which he cannot dwell." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

*Illustration.* "Think how you would feel if a leper twined his rotting arms around

43. And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.

44. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

you, hugged you to his foul breast, breathed his fetid breath into your nostrils, and kissed you. But leprosy was only the *emblem* of sin. Compared with the pressure of sin itself upon our Saviour's soul the embrace of the leper upon you body would be as the touch of a finger to the thrust of a sword." — *William Burnet Wright.*

*Illustration.* "It has been said by a great poet that great characters and great souls are like great mountains — they always attract the storms; upon their heads break the thunders, and around their bare tops flash the lightnings and the seeming wrath of God. Nevertheless, they form a shelter for the plains beneath them. That marvelous saying finds an illustration in the lowliest, saddest soul the world has ever had living in it — the Lord Christ." — *George Dawson.*

Head of Christ, from "Christ in Gethsemane." Hofmann.

**Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.** "Jesus Christ commenced, passed through, and ended his life with a sanctified human will." — *Rev. P. B. Power.* Yet we see that to make God's will his own will, driving his natural human will from the throne of his life and exalting his Father's will thereon, was not easy for Christ, as it is not easy for us.

43. **And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven.** The angel did not come until Christ had conquered in his own power. Legions of angels were always awaiting his command, but he would not summon them. **Strengthening him.** "To St. Luke alone we owe the mention of the ministering angel, appearing to him not so much for the mitigation of the anguish as for his strengthening under it for a yet more intense and fervent supplication." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

44. **And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly.** "We more or less lose sight of the true character and meaning of death. Not so the Sinless One, who, because he *was* this Sinless One, felt and understood what death meant and why and how it had forced its way into a world of life. When he entered on this conflict there was none who had conquered, but all had been conquered. The Law of death had never been broken. He, named rightly the Prince of Life, was the Breaker-up of the way." — *Archbishop Trench.* **And his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.** Luke does not *say* that Christ sweat blood, but that the sweat of his agony fell as blood drops from a wound, but the expression certainly implies that blood was mingled with the sweat; Luke uses for "drops" a word used here only in the New Testament but very common in medical literature.

*Illustration.* "It is recorded that Charles the Ninth, of France, was, upon his death-bed, so overcome by pangs of remorse under the awful recollection of the St. Bartholomew massacre he had ordered that his blood was actually driven through the pores of his skin, and stained the linen on which he lay. Sweat of blood is not frequent, certainly, but it cannot be called impossible." — *Rev. Charles S. Robinson, D.D.*

45. And when he rose up from his prayer, he came unto the disciples, and found them sleeping for sorrow,

46. And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

"Thou who hast power to look
Thus at Gethsemane, be still!
What are thine insect woes compared with his
Who agonizeth there? Count thy brief pains
As the dust atom on life's chariot wheels,
And in a Saviour's grief forget them all." — *Lydia H. Sigourney.*

45. **And when he rose up from his prayer.** "Jesus conquered *his* temptation in the garden by meeting it with prayer. The disciples succumbed to *their* temptation because they met it without prayer." — *Rev. G. H. Knight.* "Out of the wood of Gethsemane's trees Jesus makes for his disciples the yoke which is easy, and the daily cross which, when they carry it after him, is not a burden." — *Rev. Armstrong Black.*

"Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame." — *Sidney Lanier.*

**He came unto the disciples.** Matthew and Mark tell us that in his great longing for sympathy in his agony he came three times to his disciples, and three times found them sleeping. "Six separate movements within what must have been but a short space, and to and from the same persons! Ah! who that has known the bitterness of anguish and the pressure of overwhelming grief does not recognize here the agitation of affliction? The soul within is swept as by a whirlwind, and its waves rise high upon the body without." — *Dean Lefroy.* **And found them sleeping for sorrow.** "Is it not a very strange conjunction of words? One would have thought that wakefulness and sorrow would have been associated, but here is sorrow passing into sleep! As though sorrow itself contains a gracious opiate which lulls and subdues into slumber. As though God had determined that every distress should carry a certain palliative in order that we might not be burdened beyond measure. They say in the North that there is never a nettle that has not its companion dock. The dock supplies the opiate for relieving and destroying the sting of the nettle." — *Rev. John H. Jowett, D.D.*

46. **And said unto them, Why sleep ye?** He knew that they would sleep, but in spite of that knowledge there was a shock of surprise when he actually found them sleeping.

*Illustration.* "It seems to me that their devotion to Christ had reached just the point where it was ready to become something a great deal higher and finer and more spiritual than it had been thus far, and that the only way in which it could really mount up and attain that higher life was by just some such failure and exposure as it went through upon that night of crisis. You have seen how a stream which has been flowing between sunny banks, lapsing along in peaceful, quiet current, and which is just going to enter on a new experience and be hurled headlong over the dam to fall white and tumultuous into the depths below — you have seen how, between the two, after its smooth journey through the sunny woods is over, and before its larger, more excited life begins, it pauses and lies motionless in a black, brooding pool, and seems in stillness to be making itself ready for the plunge." — *Phillips Brooks.*

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Christ asked reproachfully (Matthew). The earnest Christian will not count the time he spends in communion with God, but will find all the time he can give that sweet employment far too short.

*Illustration.* "Zinzendorf, when a boy, used to write little notes to the Saviour, and throw them out of the window, hoping that he would find them. Later in life, so strong was his faith in the friendship of Christ, and in his own need of that friendship as a daily solace, that once, when traveling, he sent back his companion, that he might converse more freely with the Lord, with whom he spoke audibly." — *Austin Phelps.*

**Rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.** "The sorest temptation that ever comes to man is not that which seduces him into a common vice, but rather that which moves him to shirk his duty." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.* That was the temptation of the disciples, it was Christ's also, and how often it is ours! "All the

47. While he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them; and he drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

54. And they seized him, and led him *away*, and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed afar off.

---

devils in hell cannot force us to commit one sin. The weakest, youngest Christian, if he chooses, can laugh them all to scorn." — *F. W. Farrar.*

47. **While he yet spake, behold, a multitude.** "Composed of Levitical guards under their 'general'; a Roman chiliarch ('tribune'), with some soldiers, part of a maniple or cohort from the Fort of Antonia (John 18 : 12); and some priests and elders."—*Farrar.* **And he that was called Judas, one of the twelve.** "The story of Judas Iscariot is, without exception, the most melancholy in the history of human life. Judas was 'one of the twelve.' There is the revelation of the fact that the greatest opportunity arising from nearness to the sources of goodness and love does not necessarily mean the improvement of such opportunity nor ultimate success in the battle of life." — *Prof. A. A. Berle, D.D.* **Went before them.** To point out the place, so familiar to him but unknown to them. **And he drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.** The Greek verb used in the account of Matthew and Mark means "kissed him again and again." Judas overacted his part.

48. **But Jesus said unto him, Judas.** What a world of sorrowful tenderness Jesus put into this familiar name! It was his last appeal to the conscience of the traitor.

*Illustration.* "There is perhaps nothing in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* more impressive than those familiar words in which he states his discovery of the fact that there is a way that leads to the bottomless pit even from the very gate of the celestial city. There is such a way, and Judas found it; but, alas! Judas Iscariot is not the only passenger that has traversed it." — *Rev. W. Hay M. A. Aitken.*

**Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?** "There are many other hypocrisies that bear a fearfully strong likeness to the kiss of the Traitor. Too often have we, by our indolence, our neglect, our lukewarmness, our indifference, our faithlessness, our selfishness, our worldliness, our hypocrisy, our cowardice, our covetousness, our unkindness, our passion, our evil words, sold Christ to his enemies." — *Rev. J. S. Hartzell.*

THE SWORD OF PETER. It was not prudent for Luke, writing when he did, to name Peter as the disciple who cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus, or to name the servant, who may have become a Christian. It is significant that Luke, the physician, alone records the healing of the ear by Christ, and also the fact that it was the *right* ear. The act is one of those impulsive, foolhardy, yet brave acts which bring Peter so close to the average human heart.

III. **IN THE HIGH PRIEST'S HOUSE**, vs. 54–71. PETER'S DENIAL. 54. **And they seized him, and led him away.** They first bound his hands (John 18 : 12), probably behind his back; but he obtained permission to use them long enough to give Malchus his healing touch. **And brought him into the high priest's house.** The house of Annas, the aged, wealthy, powerful, and shrewd former high priest, whom the Jews revered as high priest still. **But Peter followed afar off.** So many Christians follow Christ "afar off," and in such following lose all the glory and grace of Christianity! "This kind of discipleship is unseemly; it means coldness of love, weakness of faith, poverty of character. Distant discipleship is unhappy and unsafe. A while ago we heard a Christian man complain that he was 'living on the northeast side of his religion.' We all know that starved, bleak, desolate aspect." — *Rev. William L. Watkinson, D.D.* If Peter had followed closely after his Lord, he would never have denied him.

THE FIRST TRIAL OF JESUS. Our Lord was first brought before Annas, an old man of seventy, who was high priest twenty years before, and was still regarded as high priest by the Jews. But the Romans had made five of his sons high priest in turn, and at this time his son-in-law Caiaphas was the high priest under the Romans. Annas asked Jesus a few questions, but did not detain him long. This was about one o'clock in the morning.

THE SECOND TRIAL OF JESUS. Caiaphas, who presided over the Sanhedrin,

next examined Jesus. No legal trial could be held before six o'clock in the morning, but the Jews went ahead, afraid that Christ might be rescued by a mob at daybreak. They brought false witnesses, whose statements failed to agree. Christ remained, to their rage, majestically silent. At last Caiaphas asked him solemnly whether he was the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus did not choose to meet this challenge in silence, and answered emphatically that he was. Thereupon the high priest and the Sanhedrin promptly declared him guilty of blasphemy and worthy of death.

JESUS CONDEMNED BY HIS OWN PEOPLE. As Jesus was led from the apartments of Annas to those of Caiaphas, probably in the same set of official buildings, occurred Peter's denial of his Lord, brought home to his conscience by Christ's glance of unutterable sadness. In his horror at what he had done, Peter rushed out into the darkness. The time that remained before six o'clock was given up to personal abuse of Christ by his captors. These judges, members of the Sanhedrin, " smote him with their fists, they spat on him, they blindfolded him, and, in derision of his prophetic claims, bade him prophesy who struck him, as they took their turn of smiting him." — *James Stalker.* Then, at six o'clock, they passed a formal vote of condemnation and hurried Jesus off to the Roman governor, who alone had the power to decree death. The Jewish trial, every step marked by illegality, was at an end.

## LESSON XI (25). — March 18.

## JESUS CRUCIFIED. — Luke 23.

### PRINT vs. 33–46.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.* — ISA. 53 : 5.

**Devotional Reading** : Isa. 53 : 3–11.
**Reference Material** : Ps. 22 : 1–21 ; Mark 15 : 22–41 ; John 19 : 16–30 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 23, 24 ; Gal. 6 : 14.
**Primary Topic** : JESUS ON THE CROSS FORGIVING SINS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 23 : 33–43.
**Memory Verse** : Christ died for us. Rom. 5 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : JESUS ON THE CROSS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 23 : 33–46.
**Memory Verse** : Rom. 5 : 8.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : WHAT OUR SALVATION COST.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will not study the more terrible aspects of the crucifixion, but will center their attention on Christ's forgiveness of his enemies, his care for his mother's welfare, and the conversion of the penitent robber. Tell also of the darkness and the earthquake, and emphasize the love of God in sending his Son to die for sinful men.

**The Older Classes**, after reviewing the familiar story, may well fix their minds on the central doctrine of Christianity, the atonement. What is salvation? Who may be saved? How are we saved? Why did Christ die? These are fundamental questions, and there will be many in the class that have not yet thought them through.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Christ was crucified at about 9 A.M., on Friday, April 7, A.D. 30, and died at about 3 P.M.

**Place.** — Calvary, probably a low hill north of the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

#### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Illegalities of Christ's trial.
In what sense was Christ's death unnecessary?
In what sense was it necessary?
The character of Herod.
The character of Pilate.
Lessons for us from the penitent robber.
The doctrine of the atonement throughout the Bible.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : What Our Salvation Cost.**

I. JESUS BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD, VS. 1–32.
The accusation before Pilate.
Pilate acquits Jesus.
The trial before Herod.
Herod's treatment of Jesus.
Jesus again before Pilate.
The Sorrowful Way.

II. The Crucifixion and the Burial, vs. 33–56.

The Place of the Skull.
The horrors of crucifixion.
The spectators.
The seven words from the cross.
The death for the sins of the world.
The burial of Jesus.
The meaning of Christ's death.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ before Herod, by Dürer. Christ before Pilate, by Tintoretto, and the famous picture by Munkacsy owned by John Wanamaker. Christ Crowned with Thorns, by Titian (Munich and the Louvre). Ecce Homo, by Titian, Rembrandt, Benjamin West (Philadelphia), Ciseri, Correggio, Ary Scheffer, Murillo. The Crucifixion, by Tintoretto (San Rocco), Mantegna (Louvre), Perugino (Florence), Raphael, Fra Angelico (Florence), Dürer (Dresden), Guido Reni (Rome), Van Dyck (Antwerp), Munkacsy, Verestchagin. The Descent from the Cross, by Fra Angelico (Florence), Volterra (Rome), Rubens (Antwerp), Rembrandt (Munich).

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

McClelland's *Verba Crucis, The Mind of Christ,* and *The Cross Builders.* Knox Little's *The Three Hours' Agony.* Gammack's *Good Friday.* Nicoll's *The Seven Words from the Cross.* Matthews's *Waiting at the Cross.* Dawson's *The Reproach of Christ.* Brown's *The Master's Way.* Morgan's *The Crises of the Christ.* Mann's *Comments at the Cross.* Tolman's *Via Crucis.* "Ian Maclaren's" *The Life of the Master.* Law's *The Grand Adventure.* Macleod's *Christ and Society.* Stone's *The Passion of Christ.* Simpson's *Christus Crucifixus.* Alexander's *Sacramental Discourses.* Vaughan's *Temple Sermons.* Nichols's *Sermons.* Glazebrook's *Prospice.* Miller's *The Way of the Cross.* Beibitz's *Gloria Crucis.* Adams's *The Seven Words from the Cross.* Lowrie's *Gaudium Crucis.*

I. **JESUS BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD**, vs. 1–32. The Accusation before Pilate. The Roman procurator or governor of Judæa at this time was Pontius Pilate, a man of cruel and domineering disposition, who had aroused the intense enmity of the Jews by a great massacre and by other savage deeds. He may have occupied a splendid old palace of Herod's, the Prætorium, to which Jesus was now conducted, bound, as a condemned criminal. The charge brought against Jesus in Pilate's court was, in general, that of being seditious, and, in particular, that of forbidding his followers to pay taxes. There was nothing to base the general charge upon, and as to the particular charge the exact opposite was the truth, Jesus having commanded that "what was Cæsar's" should be "rendered to Cæsar." The real complaint against Jesus was that he claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God; but the Jews knew that Pilate would pay no attention to a religious matter. The third charge of the Jews, that Jesus claimed kingship, was based on Christ's frequent discourses on the kingdom of heaven. This is the only charge that the Roman governor cared to investigate.

Pilate.
Detail from "Christ before Pilate."
Munkacsy.

Pilate Acquits Jesus. Pilate did not, as the Jews expected, at once order Jesus to execution on their say-so, but chose to examine the prisoner. This examination, we learn from John, was private. Jesus admitted readily that he was "a king," but explained that his kingdom was not of this world. The bearing of the accused, the wonderful expression of his face, perhaps other words of his that have not been recorded, convinced even the hard-hearted Pilate that he had an innocent man before him, and he gave to the Jewish leaders a definite and complete verdict of acquittal. Their prey seemed slipping from their grasp.

The Trial before Herod. An Eastern mob is fierce and noisy beyond anything we have in the West, and as soon as Pilate rendered his decision a fearful outcry was raised against it. The Jews cried that Jesus had taught sedition from Galilee to Jerusalem. Pilate caught at the word "Galilee" and learning by questions that Jesus came from that province, he sent him to its ruler, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, the man who had beheaded John the Baptist. Herod, in order to please his Jewish subjects, was in Jerusalem for the passover, and Pilate sent Jesus to him in order to share responsibility regarding Jesus, and also in order to show courtesy to Herod, who joined in the universal hatred of Pilate. Herod, whose life was so impure and base, was curious to see Jesus, not to learn some great truth, but to witness some great miracle. Therefore he plied the prisoner with many questions, to all of which Jesus would make no reply. He would not throw pearls before swine.

33. And when they came unto the place which is called The skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

HEROD'S TREATMENT OF JESUS. Our Lord was silent, but his enemies were not. They feared that Herod might release Jesus, both because he was a weak and superstitious man, and because he had great influence at Rome and so would give less heed to the charge that Jesus was seditious. Their vehemence and his own disappointment led Herod to reject Jesus, to join with his soldiers in mocking him, and to send him back to Pilate clad probably in the white garment of a feaster. Thus for the second time Christ was declared innocent, since it was Herod's duty to punish him if he was guilty.

JESUS AGAIN BEFORE PILATE. Now begin Pilate's contemptible attempts to please the Jews, and yet save the man whom he had declared innocent. First he will satisfy Christ's enemies by imposing on him, illegally, the horrible torture of a scourging, and then will release him according to the custom whereby some prisoner was freed at each passover. But the Jews would have nothing of this, and demanded Barabbas instead. A second time Pilate made this proposition, which they met with fierce cries, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" A third time he urged it. He had Jesus presented to the people in royal robes, a crown of thorns pressed down upon his bleeding brow. He solemnly washed his hands before the people, protesting that he was free from Christ's innocent blood! And after all, fearing for his own position and his own wretched life, he condemned Christ to the death which only he could impose! No wonder that the world has ever since execrated the memory of that cruel and cowardly Roman governor.

THE SORROWFUL WAY. The heavy beams which made the cross were loaded upon Christ, the two pieces separate or else tied together in a V. Worn by his long

Calvary and Its Vicinity.
From a photograph by Bonfils.

vigil in the Garden and by the trial and the fearful scourging which followed it, our Lord fell under the heavy burden, and it was laid, in whole or in part, on Simon, from Cyrene in northern Africa, whom the soldiers pressed into the service as he chanced to pass by. He may have been a Christian; compare Mark 15 : 21 with Acts 19 : 33; Rom. 16 : 13. Luke also tells us of the great company that followed Jesus, wailing and lamenting. Many of these were women, to whom the Saviour addressed special words of exhortation and prophecy.

II. **THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE BURIAL**, vs. 33–56. We have now reached the culminating scene in the Bible, the climax of the world's history. No event in the long record of the human race has equalled it in importance, and none can ever equal it. Let us study it with prayerful reverence.

33. **And when they came unto the place which is called The skull.** "Golgotha," the Aramaic word, and "Calvary," the Latin word, both mean "a skull." The place was outside the city walls, as executions were not allowed inside the city; and therefore the Calvary now shown in Jerusalem in connection with the Church of the

34. And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And parting his garments among them, they cast lots.

35. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also scoffed at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen.

Holy Sepulcher is probably not the real site, as that was almost certainly within the city walls. But outside the walls, on the right of the road which leads northward through the Damascus Gate, is a low, rocky hill which from a distance looks like a skull, and which, according to tradition, is an ancient place of executions. The eye-socket of the skull is made by Jeremiah's Grotto, a cave in which the prophet is said to have written Lamentations. Most modern scholars regard this as probably the true Calvary. **There they crucified him.** The hands, outstretched, were nailed to the transverse beam of the cross, and the feet, probably one on top of the other, were nailed to the upright beam; and then the cross, with its load of suffering, was lifted and dropped into the socket prepared for it, a drop which was the most terrible torture. **And the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.** "These two men were political offenders, rebels against the Roman government, Jewish bandits who had drawn the sword for the independence of their native land. They evidently belonged to the band of that Barabbas who was the hero of the Jewish populace because of his patriotism, and who therefore was preferred by them to Jesus when Pilate gave them their choice in releasing a prisoner. It was Barabbas's place that Jesus Christ occupied on that central cross and the two men on either side of him were Barabbas's men. Pilate set them there in vindictive irony. The Jews had compelled him to crucify Jesus, really because he would not attempt a political revolution, but nominally on the ground that he did. Pilate therefore determines that those bandits, who truly have done what Jesus is falsely condemned for, shall suffer with him." — *Rev. Cameron Mann, D.D.*

The Crucifixion. Murillo.

34. **And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** "Surely the most glorious instance of a divine unselfishness." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.* This is the *First Word from the Cross.* "The moment of crucifixion is a moment of intense agony. The moment of crucifixion was the time for a scream or a cry of anguish that might be wrung from the heart of a strong man. The moment of crucifixion was the consummation of the most brutal punishment, and a cry does arise from Jesus, a cry that pierces further than a shriek of pain, a cry that goes up to the throne of heaven, — 'Father, forgive them.'" — *Canon W. J. Knox Little.* "He was a young man, yet he had lived long enough to get into the habit of living and to love it; and now they were wrenching life from him, but this seemed to be his only bitterness, — that they who hurt him might be hurt. He spent his last strength in making one splendid attempt to gain their priceless souls." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland.* This cry of our Lord's assures us that we have his intercession with the Father for all our wrongdoing that is born of ignorance; but how little of it is, and for how much of our ignorance we ourselves are to blame! **And parting his garments among them, they cast lots.** The Roman executioners were allowed to keep the clothes of the prisoners whom they executed. John was there, and gives us fuller details (John 19 : 23, 24).

35. **And the people stood beholding.** The Greek implies that they gazed solemnly at the awful sight, perhaps already regretting their part in bringing it about. **And the rulers also scoffed at him.** "We look with horror upon the injustice and cruelty

36. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, offering him vinegar,

37. And saying, If thou art the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38. And there was also a superscription over him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39. And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us.

40. But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

---

of the unbelieving Jews, upon the perfidy of Judas, upon the time-serving spirit of the judge, the insensibility of the executioner, and the insolence of the mob. But these were only the instruments of a higher power. Our sins were the original causes in the dreadful business of his death. They were truly the murderers and persecutors of our Lord." — *Rev. Samuel Nichols, D.D.* **Saying, He saved others ; let him save himself.** In their first words they spoke the truth, a far greater truth than they knew. But " if he were to save the world he could not save himself. This was the price he must pay. He had counted the cost and made his choice." — *Rev. C. Armand Miller.* **If this is the Christ of God, his chosen.** It seemed to them to be utterly absurd that God's Chosen One should suffer this horrible death ; but how often through the ages have those most honored by God been shamefully treated by men!

36. **And the soldiers also mocked him.** There were four soldiers (a quaternion) on guard, officered by a centurion ; see John 19 : 53. They were to remain there till the condemned should die, and men sometimes hung on the cross for days before death released them from their sufferings. **Coming to him, offering him vinegar.** The sour wine, their usual drink, a jar of which was probably near by. They doubtless lifted cups of it to Christ's lips and then snatched them away with insulting jeers.

37. **And saying, If thou art the King of the Jews, save thyself.** The Roman soldiers hated the Jews, and the inscription on the cross proclaimed Jesus as the Jewish king.

38. **And there was also a superscription over him.** It was customary to print the crime of the crucified in black letters on a board whitened with gypsum, and then nailed to the cross over his head. **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.** Pilate had the title take this form in sarcastic revenge on the Jews for the decision they had forced from him. The superscription, that all might read it and understand, was in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. Probably it was a little different in the three languages, which would account for the slightly different forms in Mark, Luke, and John, that in Matthew combining all three. " In summoning three of the leading languages of earth in that day to bear witness to the royalty of the one who hung upon the cross ; in summoning three forms of civilization, the Roman with its genius for political administration and material development, the Greek with its genius for philosophy and art, and the Hebrew with its genius for ethics and religion, to confess the Kingship of Jesus, they wrote more wisely than they knew. The One who hung there in apparent helplessness has become in all these lines of human advance the King of kings and Lord of lords." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

39. **And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him.** Matthew and Mark say that both the robbers reproached Jesus at first, for had he not had an unexcelled chance to lead the Jews in an uprising against the Romans, and refused to use his opportunity? But the reproaches of one robber passed into bitter revilings, while those of the other were soon silenced by the Saviour's marvellous influence even on the cross. **Saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us.** That addition, " and us," made the insult half a petition.

40. **But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God?** He was past the fear of men, who had done their worst upon him, but he was going before the judgment bar of God. " These two partners in sin had dissolved partnership, now a whole universe had come between them." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland.* **Seeing thou art in the same condemnation?** It was shameful to revile a sufferer, and especially shameful in one who was himself receiving the punishment of his crimes.

41. And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42. And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.

43. And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

41. **And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds.** This humble confession of his sins, this bowing before the throne of justice, shows that the robber was far on his way toward the Christian life. **But this man hath done nothing amiss.** "By his rebuke, confession, and faith that penitent thief becomes the herald of the royal dignity of our Lord in the same instant that the Messianic hope of the apostles themselves was most vehemently shaken." — *Rev. Gomer B. Matthews.*

42. **And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.** How powerful must have been the personality of the Saviour when even as he hung on the cross men thought of him as a king coming into his kingdom!

43. **And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee.** "There was no death so cruel as that of crucifixion, because the prisoner died not from the loss of blood, or in a short space of time, but through the lingering agony of open wounds, and the arrest of circulation at the extremities, and the tension of the the nervous system, and the oppression on the brain and heart. Jesus would be crucified about ten o'clock, and he did not die till shortly after three, so that for five hours he endured this pain of torn nerves and intense thirst and racked body and throbbing brain. It is in such circumstances that even the bravest of men are apt to forget others; but it was in this supreme agony that our Lord fulfilled his own law that a man should bethink himself in life not of his own need but of the need of his brother man." — "*Ian Maclaren.*"

Mary and John. Plockhorst.

**To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.** This is the *Second Word from the Cross.* "The Good Shepherd shall go back to the house of God with this lost sheep upon his shoulder. If Satan again should stand before the throne and ask, 'Was it worth while being born, being judged, condemned, and crucified for this?' then shall the Shepherd answer, 'It was worth it all to save this one soul.'" — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.* Christ takes for granted the immortality of the soul, here and elsewhere. He regards "death as not an end, not a dreamless sleep, not even an interruption of self-consciousness. '*To-day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise.'" — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.*

*The Third Word from the Cross* (John 19 : 26, 27) was, to Mary, his mother, "Woman, behold, thy son!" and to John, the beloved disciple, "Behold, thy mother!" Doubtless Joseph had died long before this; and, though Jesus had brothers and sisters, they may not have been able to care for Mary as well as John, who had property, and certainly they would not have entered, as John did, into Christ's tender love for his mother. "None had such proof of Christ's divinity as Mary." — *Rev. William H. Adams.* None saw so deeply into that divinity as John. On the con-

44. And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour,

45. The sun's light failing: and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46. And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.

---

trary, Christ's brethren, at this time, did not believe in him. From that hour, we read, John took Mary to his own home.

44. **And it was now about the sixth hour.** Noon, the day beginning at sunrise, six in the morning. **And a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.** Three o'clock in the afternoon. "It was the darkest hour the earth ever saw." — *Rev. Donald Macleod, D.D.*

45. **The sun's light failing.** This was a supernatural event, yet wholly to be expected since the Creator hung there in the shadow of death. It was the passover, and the moon was full, so that it could not have been an eclipse of the sun. **And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.** There was a great earthquake, which tore asunder even the tombs hewn in the rocks. "The veil which secluded the Holy of Holies, a sacred tapestry never entered but by the High Priest, and by him once only in the year, was rent in sunder, from the top to the bottom. And this at the very hour of evening sacrifice, when the High Priest must have been standing at the golden altar. The old dispensation is no more. The old priesthood is superseded. The old sacrifices have lost their value, and are absorbed in the one great sacrifice for sin." — *Rev. James W. Alexander, D.D.*

*The Fourth Word from the Cross* (Matt. 27 : 46 ; Mark 15 : 34) was a cry out of this terrible darkness, interpreting it through the spirit of Jesus : "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That was to him the real agony of death, the fearful effect of our sin which he bore for us, the sense of alienation from his Father. Dante (*Purgatorio*, XXIII., 73–75) finds in this cry an exultant joy, our Lord realizing that he had reached the lowest depth of his sorrowful journey, and thenceforth it would be all upward to the light.

*The Fifth Word from the Cross* (John 19 : 28), spoken at the same time, was a cry wrung from Christ's human sufferings : "I thirst." John saw in this cry, and in the drink which our Lord no longer refused, a fulfilment of the prophecy of Ps. 69 : 21. This is the only evidence we have of the sufferings of Christ's human body, and proves that those sufferings were real, and that his body was not a mere appearance wrapped around itself by Deity, as was afterwards taught by one of the sects.

*The Sixth Word from the Cross*, following in swift succession the fourth and fifth, is but one word in the Greek, "It is finished." "Jesus knew by faith that his task was accomplished, though it did not so appear to men." — *Rev. Walter Lowrie.* He had done God's part in our salvation. It only remains for each sinner to do his own part, humbly and joyfully to accept what Christ has done for him.

46. **And Jesus, crying with a loud voice.** His strength was as yet far from being exhausted. He yielded up his life voluntarily, and long before the time when his sufferings, great as they were, would have killed him. **Said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.** This was the *Seventh Word from the Cross*, and the last. It is quoted from Ps. 31 : 5. "The word here translated 'commend' literally means to 'deposit,' as when persons deposit their valuables with their banker for safe custody, because for the time they are unable to guard them under their own hand." — *Rev. Robert Law, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "St. Polycarp, St. Basil the Great, and St. Bernard; Charlemagne, St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Louis of France, and Christopher Columbus; John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Martin Luther, and Bishop Ridley; Lady Jane Grey, Mary Queen of Scots, John Knox, and George Herbert; and multitudes, eminent and obscure, have gone out of death into life with these words on their lips." — *Rev. James S. Stone, D.D.*

**And having said this, he gave up the ghost.** "Ghost" is an old English word for spirit. All the evangelists speak of Christ's death in the same terms, as a yielding up of his soul to God.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS. Luke cannot picture the anguish of Mary and John, of Peter and James, of Mary Magdalene and the three of Bethany. He does tell us of

the centurion's testimony that "certainly a righteous man" had been executed, of the horrified grief of the general populace, and the sad gaze of Christ's followers and friends from afar. Also he records the good deed of a member of the Sanhedrin, one who had not voted Christ's death, Joseph of Arimathea, who boldly begged Christ's body from Pilate and carefully laid it away in his own newly made tomb, hewn in the rock of a garden near Calvary. Thus was the prophecy fulfilled that the Messiah should make his grave with the rich (Isa. 53 : 9). John 19 : 39, 40 tells that this loving task was shared by another Sanhedrist, the same Nicodemus who visited Jesus by night at the outset of his ministry.

The Meaning of Christ's Death. "In that cross of Christ God expressed his unqualified hatred of sin. The very fires that burn the sacrifice were the fires of his wrath against all evil. Once it was my lot to see a mother snatch up her child from the railway track just as the rushing train was almost upon it. The mother was transformed for the moment into a veritable fury, yet never did I see love more radiant than in the wild fury of that mother. . . . When man's sin has done its worst in nailing Christ to the cross with lawless hands, in that very cross God plants the kiss of forgiveness upon the face of the murderers." — *G. Campbell Morgan.*

It is idle to inquire whether it was necessary that Christ should have fulfilled prophecy by dying on the cross. Of course men's sins that caused Christ's death were not necessary ; but they were committed, and God knew that they would be committed, and communicated that knowledge to the minds of the prophets.

Just one thing is to be seen in the scene on Calvary — the love of God. God's hatred of sin, to be sure ; God's sternness, God's justice, God's truth ; but all this is lost and swallowed up in God's love. God so loved that he gave ; not he so reasoned, or so judged, or so fiercely determined, but he so loved. And the lesson of the cross is lost upon us except as we enter into God's love.

*Illustration.* "In the Pædagogium on the Palatine Hill at Rome was found a rude *graffito* done by a slave in ridicule of a Christian comrade. It represents an ass suspended on a cross, and under it is scrawled in miserable Greek, 'Alexamenos worships his god.' I thought as I saw this relic in the Museo Kircheriano how little that slave knew that those arms were outstretched for him, that those feet and hands were pierced for him, that the agony of death was for him, all to reveal how a common Father loved the humblest of his children. We can pardon him, for he knew not what he was doing. But what shall we say of the professed followers of our Lord who hold up to the world the image of the Crucified marred by selfishness, narrowness, greed, and pride ? Do men see in our lives the Christ of Calvary ? " — *Canon H. C. Tolman.*

## LESSON XII (26). — March 25.

## REVIEW: JESUS THE WORLD'S SAVIOUR.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*** — 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

**Devotional Reading** : Rev. 7 : 9–17.
**Primary Topic** : Favorite Stories of the Quarter.
**Memory Verse** : He loved us, and sent his Son. 1 John 4 : 10.
**Junior Topic** : Favorite Lessons of the Quarter.
**Memory Verse** : 1 Tim. 1 : 15.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Luke's Picture of Jesus.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Lessons from Luke's Gospel.

A number of forms of review are given, that the teacher may choose the form best suited to his class, and perhaps combine several forms in one review.

### I. THE "CURTAIN" REVIEW.

For this review, which is suited to the Primary classes, use the series of Lesson Pictures published by the W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. Prepare a large box, open only at the front. Fit up the front with a curtain on a roller, and with a string at the side by which it can be rolled up. Mark the curtain with ornamental letters : "Favorite Stories of the Quarter." Make a slit in the top of the box at the rear,

through which you can manage the pictures. These will be placed in order, facing outward, each fastened by a paper clip to the picture behind it, as many clips as there are pictures. Roll up the curtain and show a picture, asking a pupil to be the " showman " and tell the story of the picture. Close the curtain, remove the first clip, and tip the picture forward so that it falls face downward on the floor of the box, thus exposing the next picture. Proceed thus with all the pictures, each pupil being " showman " in turn.

## II. A QUESTION TOURNAMENT.

One of the best ways of conducting a review is by holding a question tournament. To do this, appoint two leaders who will divide the class into two sides. These sides will meet and draw up sets of questions on all the lessons of the quarter, submitting the questions to the teacher, who will see that all are fair questions and are clearly stated. On review Sunday the members of each side will sit together. The leader on one side will ask a question which the leader of the other side will answer, first consulting the members of his side. Then the second leader will ask a question; and so it will proceed, all the questions being asked and answered by the leaders, but the sides being consulted always before the answers are given. If an answer is incorrect the teacher will say so, and will score one against the side giving it. The side that answers most questions correctly will be the victor and may be entertained at a class social by the other side.

## III. THE TEACHINGS REVIEW.

The review topic for young people and adults is " Lessons from Luke's Gospel." Divide the eleven lessons among the students, giving two lessons to some students if you have fewer than eleven in the class, and repeating some of the lessons if you have more than eleven students. Each student will state the principal teachings of the lesson assigned him, and when he is through the other members of the class will add to the list if they can. Here is a sample " teaching " for each lesson :

*Lesson I.* Healing of the soul and of the body should go together.

*Lesson II.* Pride is a weed that keeps the flowers of fine qualities from growing in Christian lives.

*Lesson III.* God goes as far in pursuit of sinners as he can go and leave them their free will.

*Lesson IV.* It is never enough simply not to oppress the poor; we must give them active aid.

*Lesson V.* If we receive good things from God and do not get with them the grace of gratitude, we have got very little.

*Lesson VI.* We can truly pray to God only so far as we have the Spirit of God.

*Lesson VII.* The way to interest people in Christianity is to get them to do something for Christ.

*Lesson VIII.* The men that think they can do little for Christ are the men who can do little for him — because they think that way.

*Lesson IX.* We give " the widow's mite " only when we give our all.

*Lesson X.* Everything comes to him who yields everything.

*Lesson XI.* Our salvation cost Christ everything and costs us nothing; yet it requires our all after we are saved.

## IV. THE OBJECT REVIEW.

Get each member of the class to make (or obtain already made) an object that will illustrate the lesson assigned to him. He will bring the object to the class and hold it up, and the class will guess which lesson (or what event) is to be illustrated by it. Then he will tell the story of the lesson, the class adding the facts that he may omit. The objects that may be used are as follows :

*Lesson I.*, a watering-trough.

*Lesson II.*, toy tables and couches arranged in a hollow square.

*Lesson III.*, a bean pod.

*Lesson IV.*, a dry bit of bread.

*Lesson V.*, bandage for the lower part of a leper's face.

*Lesson VI.*, model of an altar.
*Lesson VII.*, tree-like twig stuck in a box full of dirt.
*Lesson VIII.*, gilded model of ancient coin.
*Lesson IX.*, model of two mites, colored to resemble copper.
*Lesson X.*, model of an ancient cup.
*Lesson XI.*, model of Calvary, with three crosses.

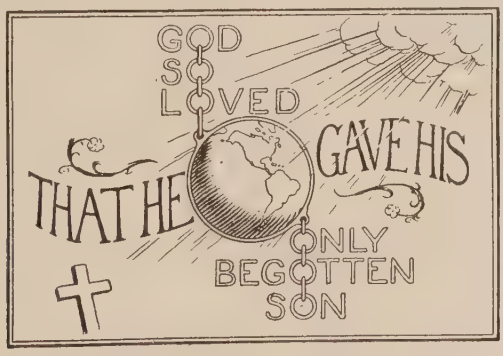
## V. A PRESENT-DAY REVIEW.

Adult classes will get the most benefit from this form of review, which consists of modern applications of the lessons, each to be made by a separate member of the class, who will speak or read a paper, his time limit being (strictly) three minutes. The following assignments are suggested :

*Lesson I.*, " What should we keep of the old-time Sabbath? "
*Lesson II.*, " Why it is hard to be humble to-day."
*Lesson III.*, " Are our churches really open to the prodigals? "
*Lesson IV.*, " What should our rich men do for our Lazaruses? "
*Lesson V.*, " Men and women who deserve much gratitude and receive little."
*Lesson VI.*, " What may we reasonably expect from prayer? "
*Lesson VII.*, " Why it is hard for a modern business man to be a Christian."
*Lesson VIII.*, " How the church should utilize its average members."
*Lesson IX.*, " How can we get our church members to give as much as they should? "
*Lesson X.*, " Things that Christians do not grieve enough over."
*Lesson XI.*, " How the message of the cross might be brought to all men in a generation."

## VI. A CHRIST REVIEW.

The review topic for the Intermediates and Seniors is " Luke's Picture of Christ." Ask the pupils to go over the lessons and draw from each as many features of Christ's portrait as possible. From one lesson they will learn, perhaps, of his tact ; from another, of his gentleness ; from another, of his courage, and so on. Each will make a list of these qualities, and of the lesson or lessons illustrating each. The review will consist of a detailed discussion of these lists, and the making of a model list from all the lists.



# SECOND QUARTER.

APRIL 1 —JUNE 24, 1923.

(First Quarter of a Six-Months Course.)

## LESSON I. — APRIL 1.

## THE WALK TO EMMAUS (Easter Lesson). — Luke 24.

**PRINT vs. 13–31.**

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.* — Luke 24: 5, 6.

**Devotional Reading**: Isa. 53 : 7–12.
**Reference Material**: Deut. 18 : 15–19; Ps. 16 : 10; 22; 110; Isa. 61 : 1–3; Matt. 28 : 1–10; Acts 2 : 22–36; 1 Cor. 15 : 3–20; Col. 3 : 1–4.
**Primary Topic**: A Walk with Jesus.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 24 : 13–31.
**Memory Verse**: I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Rev. 1 : 18.
**Junior Topic**: Jesus as a Companion.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 24 : 13–31.
**Memory Verses**: Luke 24 : 45, 46.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: Living with the Risen Lord.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: What Christ's Resurrection Means.

Inasmuch as there was not room in the twelve Sundays of the preceding quarter for the story of our Lord's resurrection and appearances, the Lesson Committee brings over the account of the walk to Emmaus as the first lesson in the second quarter. The fact that very many schools wish a special Easter lesson made it desirable to let the resurrection story come in its proper chronological order on Easter Sunday.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**For the Younger Classes** draw on the blackboard or on a large sheet of paper six squares in which you will make, as the lesson proceeds, very simple drawings, using merely upright strokes for the characters, horizontal lines for the road, and so on. The first will show the two on their way to Emmaus, slanting two yellow strokes in the direction in which they are going. In the second add a red mark to represent Jesus. In the third make a square for the house, within which is an oblong for the table and horizontal marks for the three reclining at the meal. In the fourth, the same, but Jesus has vanished. In the fifth, the two going back to Jerusalem, slanting in the opposite direction from the first drawing. In the sixth a square for the upper room, strokes for the ten disciples (blue for John, green for Peter) and for the two from Emmaus.

**Intermediate Classes** may study all the appearances of the risen Christ, build-

EXODUS
I
Thou shalt have none other gods but me.
II
Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven
V
Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
VI
Thou shalt do no murder.
VII
Thou shalt not commit adultery.
III
Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

MOSES AND THE LAW

ing up as they do so an Easter lily of crepe paper, each petal having written on it the name of one appearance. Give out these petals in advance, each pupil receiving one to be prepared to tell about that appearance. Previously make the green stem, rising out of the black soil of Calvary. A rubber band will fasten the petals to it one by one as they are discussed, and at the close you will wind green paper around the petals at the base over the rubber band.

**In the Older Classes** you will discuss the various appearances of the risen Christ, each one being assigned to a separate student, and you will ask every member of the class to come with a list, as long as he can make it, of the reasons for believing in Christ's resurrection. From these lists you will build up a complete list for the blackboard or a large sheet of paper.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Christ rose from the dead Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30. He ascended Thursday, May 18.

**Place.** — Jerusalem, the village of Emmaus seven and a half miles distant, and the road between. Also Galilee and the Mount of Olives.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The ten (or eleven) appearances of the risen Christ.
A comparison of the Gospels to determine the order of events on Easter morning.
Arguments for belief in Christ's resurrection.
Prophecies of Christ in the Pentateuch.
Prophecies of Christ in the prophetical writings.
Christ's resurrection involving ours.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Living with the Risen Lord.**

I. The First Appearances of the Risen Lord, vs. 1–12.

The appearance to Mary Magdalene.
The appearance to the other women.
Peter and John visit the tomb.

II. The Third Appearance of the Risen Lord, vs. 13–35.

A wonderful conversation.
The blessing of the bread.
"The Lord is risen indeed."

III. The Remaining Appearances of the Risen Lord, vs. 36–53.

The appearance to Peter.
The appearance to the ten apostles.
The appearance to the eleven apostles.
The appearance to the seven in Galilee.
The appearance to the eleven on a mountain.
The appearance to more than five hundred.
The appearance to James.
The appearance to the apostles at the ascension.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The Resurrection, by Bazzi (Siena), Ghiberti (Florence), Piero della Francesca (Borgo San Sepolcro), Perugino (Rome), Titian (Brescia), Tintoretto (Venice), Dürer, Burne-Jones, etc. The Women at the Tomb, by Duccio (Siena), Fra Angelico (Florence and S. Marco), La Farge (St. Thomas's, New York), Bouguereau, Plockhorst, Pfannschmidt. Christ and Mary Magdalene, by Titian (London), Correggio (Madrid), Filippino Lippi (Venice), Mantegna (London), etc. The Walk to Emmaus, by Duccio (Siena), Melloni (London), Plockhorst. The Supper at Emmaus, by Marziale (Venice), Titian (Louvre), Carpaccio (Venice), Veronese (Louvre and Dresden), Rubens (Madrid), Rembrandt (Louvre), Hofmann, Ford Madox Brown, Fritz von Uhde, L'Hermitte (Boston), etc. The Ascension, by Giotto (Padua), Lucca della Robbia (Florence), Perugino (Lyons), Mantegna (Florence), Tintoretto (Florence), Correggio (Parma), La Farge (Church of the Ascension, New York).

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Nicoll's *Sunday Evening* and *The Garden of Nuts*, Morrison's *The Weaving of Glory* and *The Unlighted Luster*. Shannon's *God's Faith in Man*. Jenkins's *Life and Christ*. Ker's *The Victory of Faith*. Gordon's *Through Man to God*. Mayo's *Graces and Powers of the Christian Life*. Watson's *The Life of the Master*. Stewart's *A King among Men*. Aked's *Wells and Palm Trees*. Jones's *The Unfettered Word*. Gregg's *Our Best Moods*. Jackson's *The Teaching of Jesus*. Sweetapple's *The Earthly Footsteps of Jesus*. Knight's *The Master's Questions to His Disciples*. Trench's *Studies in the Gospels*. Dawson's *Sermons on Daily Life and Duty*. Talmage's *Sermons, Second Series*. Blaikie's *The Public Ministry of Our Lord*. Munger's *The Appeal to Life*. MacArthur's *Quick Truths in Quaint Texts, First Series*. Black's *The Evening and the Morning*. Moody's *Short Talks*. Hall's *Cameos of Christ*. Boardman's *Our Risen King's Forty Days*. Farrar's *Life of Christ*. Bishop Carpenter's *Forty Days of the Risen Life*. Beecher's *Sermons, Vol. I.* Stuart's *Children of God*. Lorimer's *The Galilean*. Macmillan's *The Spring of the Day*. Spurgeon's *Sermons, Vol. 18*. Iverach's *The Other Side of Greatness*. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible*.

I. **THE FIRST APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN LORD**, vs. 1–12. The first appearances of our Lord on Easter morning were in response to the loving thoughtfulness of certain women, who came before daybreak bringing spices to embalm the body of Jesus. These were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, Salome the mother of John, Joanna the wife of Chuza, and other women. They had been wondering how they could manage to roll back the heavy stone and get access to the tomb, but they found, to their amazement and distress, that the stone had been rolled back and that the tomb was empty.

Peter and John Visit the Tomb (John 20 : 1–10). When Mary Magdalene found the tomb empty she ran at once to Peter and John, the leading apostles, and

13. And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Ĕm-mā′-ŭs, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.

told them the startling news. At once they ran to the spot, John, the younger, outrunning Peter. It was characteristic of him, however, to pause in reverence at the entrance of the tomb, while the headstrong Peter, catching up with him, did not hesitate to enter. He found Christ's graveclothes still in the shape of his body, like a chrysalis from which the butterfly has escaped. That sight was in itself sufficient to convince John of the resurrection.

The Appearance to Mary Magdalene (John 20 : 11–18). It is noteworthy that the first appearance of the risen Lord was not, as might have been expected, to Peter or John or James, the favorite disciples, or to Mary his mother or Mary of Bethany, or some terrifying appearance to Pilate or Herod or Caiaphas, but was gently vouchsafed to a humble woman whom he had cured of a fearful malady. It was her gratitude and her faithful following, we may believe, that won for her this signal honor. But no writer of a false Gospel would have thought of this.

The Risen Lord and Mary Magdalene. Plockhorst.

She had returned to the tomb, evidently after Peter and John left, and found in the tomb two white angels sitting where the Redeemer's head and feet had lain. She moaned out her inquiry for the precious form, evidently through her tears not recognizing them as angels, and, turning away, saw a man whom in the dim light she thought to be the gardener, but who revealed himself to her as the risen Saviour. He prevented her impulse to grasp him, and bade her hasten and give the good news to the sorrowing disciples.

The Appearance to the Other Women (Luke 24 : 9–11). While this was happening, the other women also had seen the angels, or at least one of them (not necessarily the same angels — must not the place have been filled with them ?) and had been bidden to tell the disciples of Christ's resurrection. As they sped on their errand Christ showed himself to them also, coming from his interview with Mary Magdalene, and allowing them to grasp his feet and worship him.

II. **THE THIRD APPEARANCE OF THE RISEN LORD**, vs. 13–35. "Of all the appearances of the risen Christ, none has a stronger hold upon Christendom than this one. It has brought light to many darkened hearts, and comfort to innumerable souls." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

13. **And behold, two of them were going that very day.** Two of the disciples of Christ, but not two of the apostles, for they found the eleven apostles when they returned to Jerusalem (v. 33). "It was not to any of the wise, or mighty, or noble after the flesh that the risen Christ revealed himself first, but to the weak and foolish

14. And they communed with each other of all these things which had happened.

15. And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17. And he said unto them, What communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? And they stood still, looking sad.

18. And one of them, named Clē′-ŏ-păs, answering said unto him, Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days ?

---

and despised things of the world." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.* This, which is just what we might have expected of the lowly Messiah, is the last thing that would have been imagined if any one were writing a false account. **To a village named Emmaus.** This may have been a village now called Kulonieh, west of Jerusalem, or it may have been southwest of Jerusalem near the main road to the coast, where is now a ruin called Khamasah, a name somewhat resembling Emmaus. **Which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.** This distance, seven and a half miles, shuts out the Emmaus of 1 Macc. 3 : 40 ; 9 : 50 (Amwas or Nicopolis) which is one hundred and seventy-six furlongs, or twenty-two miles, from Jerusalem, so far that the disciples could not have returned to Jerusalem the same evening.

14. **And they communed with each other of all these things which had happened.** " It is easy to suppose that they were discussing the great events connected with our Lord's arrest, trial, condemnation, and crucifixion. We know, too, that vague rumors concerning his resurrection were current in the city before they left." — *Rev. R. S. MacArthur, D.D.*

15. **Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.** " He always draws near to those who sincerely talk about him, and especially to those who talk sadly about him, either because they are afraid they have lost him, or because they are tempted to think that he did not rise from the dead." — *Rev. Ebenezer E. Jenkins, LL.D.*

16. **But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.** " Holden by what ? Holden by unpreparedness for his coming ; by wrong views ; by non-expectation ; by man-manufactured theories ; by ignorance of the Scriptures." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.* " Strange, indeed, that those two disciples could walk so near their Master, and hear the sound of his voice, and not know him ; yet the same thing has happened to you and me. Often in our lives have we walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus, by the side of our Lord, so absorbed in selfish sorrows or worldly musings that we have not known who it was." — *Rev. A. D. Mayo, D.D.* " Get rid of ignorance, prejudice, and pharisaism. If you are filled with prejudice, though Christ himself should walk with you, you would not know him." — *Rev. George Dawson.*

17. **And he said unto them, " What communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? "** " If Christ were to break in suddenly on some of my talks, how ashamed before him I should sometimes feel ! And yet, he is always a listener to my speech. Dare I allow myself, in even an intimate conversation, to utter anything — any bitter word, any untruthful slander, any ungenerous insinuation, any unseemly jest, any impure remark — which it would cover me with confusion to think he has overheard ? " — *Rev. G. H. Knight.* **And they stood still, looking sad.** " They had a Christ, but they have him no longer. Every conception of him they had held was thrown into confusion ; every hope they had won from him was blighted." — *Theodore T. Munger.*

18. **And one of them, named Cleopas, answering said unto him.** Cleopas (short for Cleopatros) is mentioned only here, for his name is not the same as that of Clopas named in John 19 : 25. The other disciple was so obscure that his name had been forgotten as early as when Luke wrote. It is not at all likely to have been Luke himself, though some have thought so because Luke alone tells the story ; but it is briefly referred to in Mark 16 : 12, 13. Still another conjecture is that it is " Cleopas and his wife who are going home together to Emmaus. Some old artists knew this, and said so." — *Rev. Armstrong Black.* **Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem.** Are you the only dweller in Jerusalem that does not know about the tragedy of Jesus ? For surely, they imply, there could not be others.

19. And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

21. But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel. Yea and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass.

22. Moreover certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb;

23. And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.

24. And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25. And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

---

19. **And he said unto them, What things?** He knew, of course, but he wanted them to tell him. "Much of the talk of the suffering world has no earthly value in itself; it is good only as an escape for pain. The talk of those two disciples was foolish, and the Lord did put a stop to it eventually, but he allowed it to run on. He knew that it was a temporary necessity. The mind of man is sometimes like a reservoir: you must get out the flood of folly before you can occupy it with wisdom. There is something divinely wise and patient in the delay of Christ. He allowed them to have their talk out. Exhaustion is sometimes the only condition of receptivity." — *Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D.* **The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word.** Christ's miracles were greater than those of all the prophets, and his teachings far surpass theirs in beauty, wisdom, and power. "Christ never speaks as one giving the results of long and painful gropings after truth, but rather as one who is at home in the world to which God and the things of the spirit belong. He asserts that which he knows, he declares that which he has seen." — *Rev. George Jackson.* **Before God and all the people.** His deeds not done in a corner but before the eyes of all.

20. The essence of the tragedy is here set forth: the cruel slaughter, by the people and their appointed leaders, of this best man among them.

21. **But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel.** Redeem the nation from its sins and so from its bondage to Rome. "In the prophecy of the father of the Baptist the two redemptions, from the yoke of evil and from the yoke of their foreign oppressors, are wonderfully blended together (Luke 1 : 68–79; compare John 8 : 31–36)." — *Trench.* **Yea and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass.** After three days in the grave, they imply, Jesus would be dead beyond the possibility of revival.

22. **Moreover certain women of our company amazed us.** The two disciples alternate between hope and despair. They now tell the resurrection story — but they cannot believe it!

24. **And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb.** They refer to the visit made by Peter and John. **And found it even so as the women had said.** The empty tomb, that is, and the graveclothes lying as if Jesus had passed miraculously out of them. **But him they saw not.** "No accumulation of evidence, no amount of proof, could have made any impression on these two in their then state of mind. They were resolved to be miserable." — *Rev. James Iverach, D.D.*

25. **And he said unto them, O foolish men.** "Because of their meaning and rarity, our Lord's exclamations have a kind of reverberant Niagara roar: they will sound on to time's utmost distances. Man's slowness to accept the divine, the permanent, the prophet-things — oh, his backwardness here is enough to make the angels weep!" — *Rev. Frederick F. Shannon, D.D.* **And slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!** "I do not wonder at what men suffer: I wonder at what men lose. Our unbelief has its Nemesis. Our faith has not been burnt into us deep enough. We ought to be more splendid, more audacious, more defiant in our living faith." — *Rev. Charles F. Aked, D.D.* "Unbelief, which we so often excuse,

26. Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?

27. And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they were going: and he made as though he would go further.

29. And they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them.

---

and for which we almost claim pity, is not treated by our Lord as a trifle." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

26. **Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things.** "They learned that the crucifixion was no accident. It was no longer the greatest of calamities; it became the greatest of necessities. They saw its moral and spiritual grandeur, and it dawned upon them that the cross they loathed was something more wonderful than any crown." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* **And to enter into his glory?** "The disciples tried to dissuade Christ from the cross. Had they succeeded, they would have robbed him of his empire. There was no other way to the throne. No cross, no crown. If Christ was to reign from the river to the ends of the earth, it 'behooved him to suffer.'" — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

27. **And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets.** Every book of the Pentateuch and every book of the prophets contains in some form a prophecy of Jesus Christ. "When Jesus had passed through the mysteries of death and resurrection, when he had faced again the glories and terrors of the spiritual universe and returned to this dim spot called earth, he took the Old Testament in his nailed hands and blessed it, and gave it to his disciples saying, *Take, eat.*" — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* **He interpreted to them in all the scriptures.** "Once again they heard of the Paschal Lamb, and of the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness, and of the smitten shepherd in Zechariah, and of the suffering servant in Isaiah. One of the surest signs that Christ is nigh is when he makes the Bible live again." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* "He was now the risen Saviour, invested with a glory that surpassed the vision of prophets. He could have exalted them to the third heaven, and spoken words unutterable by man. But no; he opened unto them their own Scriptures." — *Rev. Ebenezer E. Jenkins, LL.D.*

*Illustration.* "The Mosaic economy never seemed more divine than at the moment of its departure. It shone out with a divine glory, like the beautiful ice-crystals of a winter morning that gleam like pearls and diamonds under the sunbeam that is to melt them away." — *Prof. W. G. Blaikie.*

**The things concerning himself.** "When the Incarnate Word expounded the Written Word to the disheartened pilgrims, they gradually came to know both it and him." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* The Bible is full of Christ, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. "Many of our difficulties arise from our narrow outlook. We do not study the great book of God, and the great book of life and history. If this were opened to us we should see that God is dealing with the world and with ourselves in the right way." — *Rev. H. D. S. Sweetapple, D.D.*

28. **And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they were going.** They had been walking for two hours or so. **And he made as though he would go further.** Some think that he was testing them to see whether they really wanted to learn more from him. Others think that he was too courteous and considerate to force an unexpected guest upon them. But Dr. Nicoll says that "he made as though he would go further just because he would have gone further." Ever throughout the gospel story we are conscious that Christ was eager to do more, say more, go further, and could not because of human unbelief, the slowness and weakness of human nature. "He would go further with us now. He asks not one sacrifice, but the oblations of every day — new offerings, new efforts. Faltering, blind, and stained, let us say: *He would go further*, and he will." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

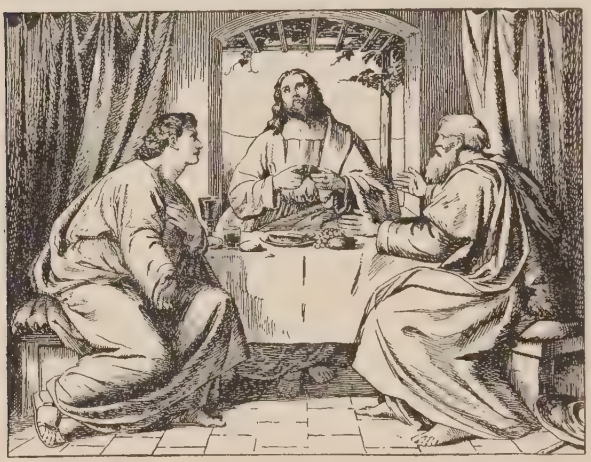
29. **And they constrained him.** "It would be just like a man and wife to say, 'Come in; we wish you would. We have plenty of room.'" — *D. L. Moody.* Some, however, think the following scene took place not in a home but in an inn. **Saying, Abide with us.** They were eager to learn more of the truth which he was so abundantly able to give them. "He who has learned to look on the face of truth at

30. And it came to pass, when he had sat down with them to meat, he took the bread and blessed; and breaking *it* he gave to them.

31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

all will not coldly turn from it, or let it go its way with the evening dark, without a word like 'Abide with us.'" — *Rev. John Ker, D.D.* **For it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent.** Talmage, in one of his vivid sermons, applies the thought to the evening of old age, the approach of the gloomy hour of temptation, the anticipation of sorrow, the nearness of death. At all such times "Jesus is the evening star, hung up amidst the gloom of the gathering night." — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

30. **He took the bread and blessed.** "Where Jesus is invited as Guest he becomes Host, and taking the humble fare in his hands he blesses it, and gives it back to the owner sweetened by his touch." — *Rev. William Newman Hall.* **And breaking it he gave to them.** "Three times over, during the forty days which intervened between his resurrection and his ascension, did our Lord Jesus Christ eat and drink with his disciples. These three meals were a decisive proof of the reality of the resurrection." — *Rev. Edward A. Stuart.*



Supper at Emmaus. (Dresden Gallery.) Alfred Diethe.

31. **And their eyes were opened, and they knew him.** "How that discovery flashed upon their hearts the Bible, so wonderful in its silences, does not tell. It may have been the quiet air of majesty with which he took at once the place of host, when they had invited him to be their guest. It may have been the familiar word of blessing that awakened sweet memories of Galilean days. Or it may have been that as he put forth his hand after the blessing to take the bread and break it, they saw that it was a hand which had been pierced." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* "In the breaking of the bread! Nothing could be simpler, more human! And yet in just such simple ways does he not come to many of us? In every great beauty of the world we feel God's glory, in every splendid sunset, every stretch of billowing ocean, every great cathedral and mountain peak. But we may feel his love just as truly in every wayside flower, every glowing star and bird's sweet note. So in the great and noble deeds of the world we find the presence of Christ, but we learn to know him perhaps even more truly as our Brother in every simple, loving act performed in his spirit." — *Mary Stewart.* **And he vanished out of their sight.** "It was only when he was about to vanish out of their sight that their eyes were opened, and they know that it was the Lord himself who had been with them. Your best blessings are not recognized by you till they have vanished." — *Rev. Hugh Macmillan, F.R.S.E.*

THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM. "Was not our heart burning within us," they cried, "while he opened to us the scriptures?" Their spirits were so fired with zeal, so pulsing with joy, that they were compelled to share their good news. Immediately they started back the seven and a half miles to Jerusalem. Perhaps never were miles shorter than those. How changed was the tone of their conversation! With what a burst of exultation they rushed in upon the little band of disciples gathered in the upper room of the Lord's supper!

*Illustration.* "When the essayist Hazlitt was a young man at home, his mind was dull and his faculties unawakened. But the poet Coleridge came to see his father, and young Hazlitt walked several miles home with him. That walk quickened his intellect, gave him a new world. His heart began to burn, and it was not the talk that did it: it was the poet who was behind the talk. . . . Napoleon was beaten, his great career was ended; he was a prisoner on St. Helena. Yet 'every one,' said the French commissioner Montchenu, 'every one who has an audience with Napoleon leaves him in a state of most intense enthusiasm.' Their hearts began to burn, and it was not the talk that did it — it was the titanic man behind the talk." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"Lord Christ, if thou art with us and these eyes
Are holden, while we sadly go and say
'We hoped it had been He, and now to-day
Is the third day, and hope within us dies,'
Bear with us, O our Master — thou art wise
And knowest our foolishness; we do not pray
'Declare thyself, since weary grows the way,
And faith's new burden hard upon us lies';
Nay, choose thy time, but ah! whoe'er thou art,
Leave us not; where have we heard any voice
Like thine? our hearts burn in us as we go;
Stay with us; break our bread; so, for our part
Ere darkness falls haply we may rejoice,
Haply when day has been far spent may know." —*Edward Dowden.*

III. **THE REMAINING APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN LORD**, vs. 36–53. The Appearance to Peter (1 Cor. 15 : 5). The lawyer-like Paul, who had gathered up with great care the evidence for Christ's resurrection, making that fact the cornerstone of his preaching, learned that the risen Lord had appeared to Peter alone. The disciples in the upper room (Luke 24 : 34) told the two from Emmaus about this appearance, Peter himself being present. Indeed, the angel at the tomb had a special message for Peter (Mark 16 : 7), and that "and Peter" was a blessed token to the denying disciple that his Lord had forgiven him. How we should like to know just what Jesus said to Peter at that meeting!

The Appearance to the Ten Apostles (John 20 : 19–23). This occurred (Luke 24 : 36–49) immediately after the two from Emmaus had finished their report, and if we had only the third Gospel we should believe that the ascension took place that very evening, instead of forty days later. We learn from Luke that the Lord verified the reality of his return from the dead by showing his hands and feet and by eating a piece of broiled fish. We learn from John that he entered the room through a closed door, and that he bestowed the Holy Spirit upon his apostles during the interview.

The Appearance to the Eleven Apostles (John 20 : 24–29). Thomas had not been present at the first appearance in the upper room, and refused to believe unless he should himself touch Christ's scarred hands and side. On the following Sunday our Saviour, who never refuses to help honest doubt into faith, visited the upper room again when Thomas was present. One sight was enough. Without waiting for the evidence of touch, Thomas cried out, "My Lord and my God!" All honest students of these testifying records join in that cry.

The Appearance to the Seven in Galilee (John 21 : 1–23). We have from the pen of the beloved disciple a very full and a priceless account of this appearance, which took place two or three weeks after the satisfaction of Thomas. The disciples had returned to Galilee — Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John, and two others, perhaps (Farrar) Philip and Andrew. The account of their great catch of fish under Christ's direction, and of their talk by the sea, especially of Christ's beautiful words to Peter, is among the most winsome of all the Bible stories.

The Appearance to the Eleven Disciples on a Mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28 : 16–20). The disciples went to this mountain by appointment of Christ. It may have been Mount Tabor, or perhaps the Mount of Beatitudes. It was on this occasion that Jesus gave them the Great Commission which has been the splendid inspiration of Christian missions.

The Appearance to More than Five Hundred (1 Cor. 15 : 6). This appearance, noted by Paul, is implied in the references in the Gospels to a general meeting in Galilee, for Christ met with all his apostles in Jerusalem. But Galilee held the greater part of his followers, and in Galilee they could meet more safely. Paul notes the surprising fact that at the time when he wrote, more than twenty years later,

most of these eye-witnesses of the resurrection were alive. Doubtless Paul had talked with many of them. This appearance may have been the same as the preceding, in which case the total number would be reduced to ten.

THE APPEARANCE TO JAMES (1 Cor. 15 : 7). Paul alone tells us of this meeting, which, if we are to believe the apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews, was not with James the apostle, but with James the Lord's brother, author of the Epistle of James. We must remember that Christ's brothers had not believed in him ; but the Gospel of the Hebrews states that James took a solemn vow that he would not eat nor drink until he had seen the risen Christ, and that then this appearance was vouchsafed to him.

THE APPEARANCE TO THE APOSTLES AT THE ASCENSION (Luke 24 : 50, 51 ; Acts 1 : 9–11). It is forty days after the resurrection, and the disciples, doubtless at Christ's command, are back in Jerusalem. There the Lord meets them, probably once more in the upper room of blessed memories, gives them loving council, and leads them forth through the eastern gate, down into the Kedron valley, up the slope of Olivet, to "the wild secluded upland country that surrounds the little village of Bethany." — *Farrar.* There, as he was renewing the Great Commission, and was blessing them, he was finally taken from them, "and a cloud received him out of their sight." They were left, and we are left, to carry his gospel to all the world, and to wait for his glorious reappearing.

Church of the Ascension.
(Mount of Olives.)

THE PROOF OF THE RESURRECTION. "Just because the resurrection of Christ means so much for human life its faith must not be grounded on sentiment, so that we shall simply believe because we wish, and our reason shall be swamped by our hearts. An intelligent person is bound by his conscience to criticise the evidence for this great event, and it is fortunate that the first witnesses are beyond reproach. The testimony of the disciples to the revelation of the third day is as strong as anything which can be produced for the best accredited fact in history. The apostles and the holy women were absolutely simple and honest country folk, without any guile of spirit or tricks of speech. There is not only no sign of artifice in their testimony, but the reader is annoyed because they are not more utterly overcome with excitement and amazement. . . . Has it ever been known in the annals of evidence that a body of simple-minded men should bear witness to a fact which beforehand they were not able to believe, and whose declaration could only involve them in the last danger, and in the end should believe it so firmly that their faith has made them into heroes and into saints ? " — *Rev. John Watson, D.D.* ("*Ian Maclaren*").

## LESSON II. — April 8.

## ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH. — Genesis 12 : 1—25 : 8; Hebrews 11 : 8–19.

(A Survey of Abraham's Life.)

**PRINT Gen. 12 : 1–5 ; Heb. 11 : 8–10, 17–19.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.*** — ROM. 4 : 3.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 145 : 1–10.
**Reference Material** : 2 Chron. 20 : 7 ; Neh. 9 : 7, 8 ; Ps. 105 : 6 ; Isa. 41 : 8 ; Matt. 3 : 9 ; Acts 7 : 2–4 ; Rom. 4 : 1–25 ; Gal. 3 : 6–9 ; Jas. 2 : 21–24.

**Primary Topic** : Abraham Obeying God.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 12 : 1–9.
**Memory Verse** : Abraham, when he was called, obeyed. Heb. 11 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : Abraham, a Man Who Trusted God.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 12 : 1–5 ; 13 : 7–12.
**Memory Verses** : Gen. 12 : 1–3.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Abraham, the Friend of God.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Abraham, a Pioneer of Faith.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** may use the sand table and construct a map of Abraham's journey. Show the plains of Mesopotamia, the Euphrates, the desert, Damascus, Mount Hermon, the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan, and finally Shechem. Give the children some idea of the great evils of idolatry, and paint in contrast the blessedness of the true religion revealed to Abraham, and his courage in following the light. Apply the lesson to the bad habits which they are to leave as they follow Jesus into his country of happiness.

**The Junior Classes** will substitute the map for the sand table, and may be set to drawing their own outline maps as the lesson proceeds.

**The Intermediate and Older Classes** will follow a list of the chief events in Abraham's life, placed before them on the blackboard or a large sheet of paper. These may be assigned beforehand to different members of the class, each to relate his incident, tell what it discloses in the character of Abraham, and what lesson we are to learn from it.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Professor W. J. Beecher dates Abraham's departure from Haran, aged seventy-five, at B.C. 1928 ; the birth of Isaac, B.C. 1903 ; the sacrifice of Isaac, B.C. 1879 ; the death of Sarah, B.C. 1866 ; the death of Abraham, B.C. 1828.

**Place.** — Haran, in northern Mesopotamia. Hebron, in southern Palestine, may be regarded as Abraham's home.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The evils of idolatry.
Difficulties which Abraham surmounted.
Elements of greatness in Abraham.
How Abraham became the friend of God.
Abraham an illustration of faith.
Our debt to Abraham.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Abraham, the Friend of God.**

I. Abraham's Faith, Gen. 12 : 1–9 ; Heb. 11 : 8–10.
   A great promise.
   A great pilgrimage.
   Altars to Jehovah.

II. Abraham's Trust, Gen. 12 : 10 — 21 : 34 ; Heb. 11 : 11, 12.
   Abraham's sad failure.
   Abraham's wise choice.
   Abraham's courageous rescue.
   Abraham's wonderful covenant.
   Abraham's halfway prayers.
   Abraham's miraculous blessing.

III. Abraham's Obedience, Gen. 22 : 1—25 : 11 ; Heb. 11 : 17–19.
   The proving of Abraham.
   The substitute sacrifice.
   The cave of Machpelah.
   Lessons from faithful Abraham.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Abraham, by Raphael, Baldovinetti, Burne Jones; scenes in his life on Ghiberti's gate in Florence and in Holbein's "Icones." The Journey to Canaan, by Jacopo Bassano (Vienna), Schirmer, Schnorr. The Meeting with Melchisedec, by Gozzoli, Flandrin, Castiglione, Rubens. The Visit of Three Angels, by Gozzoli, Raphael, Murillo, Rembrandt, Leighton, Schnorr. The Story of Hagar, by Rembrandt, Overbeck, West, Copley, Cazin, Calderon. The Destruction of Sodom, by Raphael, Rubens, Turner, Schirmer, Corot, Martin. The Sacrifice of Isaac, by Baldovinetto, Gozzoli, Andrea del Sarto (Dresden), Rembrandt (Dresden and Petrograd), Copley, Burne-Jones, Flandrin. The Burial of Abraham, by Schirmer.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Burrell's *Wayfarers of the Bible.* Greenhough's *Half-Hours in God's Older Picture Gallery.* Gordon's *Revelation and the Ideal.* Work's *Every Day.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible* (twelve chapters on Abraham and related characters). Driver in *Westminster Commentaries.* Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament.* White's *Studies in Old Testament Characters.* Edersheim's *Bible History.* Thomson's *Life and Times of the Patriarchs.* Robinson's *Leaders of Israel.* Geikie's *Hours with the Bible.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Wilberforce's *Heroes of Hebrew History.* Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church. Genesis* by Marcus Dods, in *Handbooks for Bible Classes* and *The Expositor's Bible.* Prof. W. H. Bennett in *The New Century Bible.* On Hebrews, Peake in *The New Century Bible,* Farrar in *The Cambridge Bible.*

Introductory Note to the Six-months Course. — We are now to take up a novelty in International Uniform Lessons, a six-months course in the Great Men and Women of the Bible. In former years our studies of most of the characters treated during the coming six months have extended in each case over a number of weeks, and have been involved with a study of the history of the times. The purpose

Gen. 12 : 1. Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee :

of these two quarters is to get a more complete and vivid view of each person by making a rapid survey of his or her entire life in a single lesson, at least in all but the youngest classes. It is hoped that the pupils will be encouraged to read at home all the Bible passages suggested, and that the teachers will in addition become familiar with the reference material. As to the choice of the characters to be treated, the Lesson Committee has followed the emphasis of the Bible itself, selecting those to whom the Scriptures devote most space, giving the largest number of details of their lives. In each case it has been easy for the Committee to find passages well suited to the study of each grade of the school. It was particularly difficult for the Committee to leave out such characters as Jacob, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Hannah, Jonathan, Amos, Josiah, and Daniel ; but, having regard to the limitations of a brief course which is to meet the needs of the entire school, the Committee believes that the selection made is on the whole the best. Here are twenty-five of the noblest men and women that ever lived. What a blessing it will be if during the coming two quarters all our pupils will not only grasp the essential facts of their histories, but take into their own lives the motives and spirit of these great souls !

" Biography is the only true history." — *Carlyle.*

" The embodiment of ideal character is in Jesus Christ. As these are to be studies in character, for the purpose of character-building, let the Perfect Model be kept constantly before the mind." — *W. W. White, Ph. D.*

I. **ABRAHAM'S FAITH**, Gen. 12 : 1–9 ; Heb. 11 : 8–10. " Abraham was known (Rom. 4 : 13) as ' the Father of the Faithful.' First, he was himself ' the

Ruins of Ur of the Chaldees, the home of Abraham.
Reproduced by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Faithful.' In him was most distinctly manifested the gift of faith, long, long before Luther, long before St. Paul. Second, he was ' the *Father* of the Faithful.' His very name implies this universal mission. ' The Father ' (Abba) ; ' The lofty Father ' (Ab-ram) ; ' The Father of multitudes ' (Ab-raham) ; the venerable parent, surveying, as if from that lofty eminence, the countless progeny who should look up to him as their spiritual ancestor." — *Dean Stanley.*

1. **Now Jehovah said unto Abram.** For the change of his name to Abraham at the age of ninety see Gen. 17 : 1–5. " In all this life-long journey Abraham waited upon the Voice. Again and again it is written, ' and the Lord spake unto him, saying.' It would appear that God spake audibly in those days, when, as yet, there were no Oracles. He still speaks no less really, if less audibly, to those who are willing to hear him. The Voice is heard in nature. God speaks in history also. God speaks from the pages of Holy Writ. God has ' spoken unto us ' more clearly ' in these last days by his Son.' " — *Rev. David J. Burrell, D.D.* **Get thee out of thy country.** The city of Haran, in the northern part of Mesopotamia, to which his father, Terah, had migrated 550 miles from Ur of Chaldea, northwest of the Persian

2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

4. So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Hā′-răn.

5. And Abram took Sā′-rāi his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten

---

Gulf, perhaps seeking to get away from idolatry; but he had not gone far enough, and had died in Haran. "Our first impression on reading this verse is that here we have to do with an extraordinary man. We have come upon one of the turning points in the fortunes of mankind. Here is a character of great originality. Here is one who is to found a new nation, who is to inaugurate a new era in human civilization." — *Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D.* **And from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.** "The expressions are accumulated in order to show that God made no small demand of him when he required him to sever his family ties and wander forth into an unknown land." — *Dillmann.* No act that is worth while is ever accomplished without cost. **Unto the land that I will show thee.** "This reservation of the name made obedience in some respects more difficult, in other respects easier — as indeed is the case in all such calls, it is better not to see all the difficulties." — *Marcus Dods.*

2. **And I will make of thee a great nation.** All uncertainty and hardships had in this promise their vast compensation. Verses 1, 2 were the farewell message of the great Hebrew scholar Reuchlin to his grandnephew, Philip Melanchthon, Luther's friend and fellow worker in the Protestant Reformation. **And I will bless thee, and make thy name great.** Abraham would understand this of material and spiritual blessings as well; both come to all that yield their lives to God. **And be thou a blessing.** "God is blessing us not for our own sakes alone, but also for the sake of others. Our own blessing is likely to wither unless we try to extend it to others. Christians wonder often that they have so little joy in their own hearts. Frequently the reason lies in the fact that they have not made themselves a blessing to others." — *Rev. E. W. Work, D.D.*

3. **And I will bless them that bless thee.** The friends of any friend of God are sure to share his blessedness. **And him that curseth thee will I curse.** It is a perilous thing to oppose a good man; God takes the part of all his friends. **And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** This passage points "to the ultimate extension of the religious privileges enjoyed by Abraham and his descendants to the Gentiles. The thought is a Messianic one." — *Prof. S. R. Driver.* It is Christ's Great Commission so faithfully preached and practised by Paul and by modern Christian missions. It is "a promise fulfilled through the universality of the Christian religion." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett.*

4. **So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him.** He showed his greatness in his implicit obedience to the voice of God. **And Lot went with him.** Lot was Abraham's nephew, and his father, Haran, had died long before (Gen. 11:28). **And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.** He was still comparatively young, for he died at the age of 175 (Gen. 25:7). His father, Terah, who died at the age of 205, was 145 years old when Abraham left Haran.

5. **And Abram took Sarai his wife.** The pilgrimage may well have been harder for her than for her husband. **And Lot his brother's son.** Abraham had no child, and his nephew may have been as dear as a son to him. **And all their substance that they had gathered.** "The Asiatic moves even more easily than the European. He has no furniture to carry, for, except a carpet and a few brass pans, he uses none. If he has time, he takes his cattle with him; if not, he abandons them, or sells them for any sum procurable." — *Handbooks for Bible Classes.* **And the souls that they had gotten in Haran.** "*Souls* mean *persons*, here denoting slaves." — *Westminster Commentary.* **And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan.** "The most probable route for a traveller journeying from Haran to Canaan would be to cross the Euphrates by the great ford at Carchemish (sixty miles west of Haran), then to turn south past Haran and Damascus; and after this, either, crossing one of the southern spurs of Hermon, in the neighborhood of the modern Baniyas, to enter Canaan from the

in Hā′-răn; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Heb. 11 : 8. By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a *land* not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

---

north on the west side of the waters of Merom, or, striking down into the Jordan valley, to travel along it, on the east side of the stream, until he reached the ford of el-Damiyeh (twenty-five miles north of the Dead Sea), crossing which, as Jacob did afterwards, and turning up to the northwest, he would soon reach Shechem, in the center of the land." — *Prof. S. R. Driver.* **And into the land of Canaan they came.**

Eastern Caravan.

"Momentous indeed and far-reaching in its consequences was the exodus which is here recorded without any parade or emphasis at all. Out of it grew the Jewish nation and all the witness which they bore for God through two thousand years. Out of it came the one comparatively pure and spiritual religion which the world had during that long period, and out of it indirectly came the fuller Christian light in which we walk, and which is destined to illumine all nations. Nothing which has ever been done, except the coming into the world of Jesus, can be compared with this for the magnitude and extent of its results." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

HEB. 11 : 8. **By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed.** "Faith is the sixth sense, by which alone it is possible to perceive spiritual things. So far from being credulity, it is as far as possible removed from it. It makes the invisible substantial, and founds a creed on valid evidence." — *Rev. David J. Burrell, D.D.* In what way the call came, whether by an audible voice or a conviction in the soul, is entirely immaterial. "Moses expects us to believe that God knew the mind of the Mesopotamian shepherd, as of all other men whom he had formed, and could make that mind aware of his presence." — *F. D. Maurice.*

> "The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
> How Abram was the friend of God on high."
> — *Burns, "The Cottar's Saturday Night."*

**To go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance.** As if he had inherited it from the Canaanites, who dwelt there. **And he went out, not knowing whither he went.** "God knew, but to the man it was just a plunge into the darkness. 'None mount so high as those who know not whither they are going,' said Cromwell; and what is true of great souls is more or less true of all. It is the man who is content to be led by God rather than the man who plans and carves and forces his way without regard to God who is brought forth at last into the happier and nobler places of life." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

9. **By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise.** It required faith especially because of this fact, that he was only a sojourner. "The one constant trait in patriarchal history was faith. Thus Abraham was the man of joyous, working faith; Isaac of patient, bearing faith; Jacob of contending and prevailing faith." — *Edersheim.* **As in a land not his own.** Abraham did not own even the land on which his tent was pitched, but was there on sufferance. The only land in Canaan he ever owned was the little plot of ground in which he buried Sarah. **Dwelling in tents.** Abraham's life was nomadic, not even Hebron or Beer-sheba furnishing him a permanent home. **With Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.** Abraham's wandering life lasted even into the days of Jacob, his grandson.

10. For he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

10. **For he looked for the city which hath the foundations.** The heavenly city, the city above. "The tents of the Patriarchs had no foundations; the foundations of the City of God are of pearl and precious stone (Rev. 21 : 14, 19)." — *F. W. Farrar.* **Whose builder and maker is God.** "Architect and builder," planner and artificer, and bestowing his own permanence upon his work. This is all a lovely illustration of the Christian's faith, as he travels through the transitory scenes of earth, fixing his affections on things above.

II. **ABRAHAM'S TRUST**, Gen. 12 : 10—21 : 34; Heb. 11 : 11, 12. We are now to see how this faith in the unseen God worked out in Abraham's life of plodding, day-after-day trust in his heavenly Leader.

Abraham's Sad Failure. With every reason to trust God, Abraham and Sarah failed at an important crisis in their lives. A famine drove them down into Egypt, and Abraham, fearing that Sarah's beauty would lead some one to kill him in order to possess her, arranged with her to call herself his sister instead of his wife (she was really his half-sister). This lie nearly led to the undoing of both of them, and they were only saved by the singular nobility of the reigning Pharaoh, who was on the point of marrying Sarah. "What Abraham is apart from his Teacher we see in his journey to Egypt: a very poor, paltry earthworm indeed; one not to be despised by us, because we are earthworms also, but assuredly worthy of no reverence for any qualities which were his by birth, or which became his merely in virtue of his call. What he was when he was walking in the light, when *that* transfigured him from an earthworm into a man, his after-story will help us to understand." — *F. D. Maurice.*

How slow Abraham was in learning his lesson is brought out strikingly by a repetition of this very happening some twenty years later, when Abraham was compelled for a time to sojourn in the territory of the Philistine King Abimelech. The Bible frankness in depicting the faults and sins of its chief heroes is one of the many proofs of its truthfulness.

From a photograph by Bonfils.
Hebron.

Abraham's Wise Choice. Both Abraham and his nephew, Lot, prospered exceedingly, gaining many herds and flocks. They may have agreed together, but their servants did not, and had many disputes. It was evident that a separation would be best, and Abraham, with the noble generosity which always marked him, gave the choice to the younger man, though he might properly have claimed it for himself. Lot quickly chose the fertile and beautiful plain of the lower Jordan. "As the patriarchs gazed upon it, the whole cleft of the Jordan valley was rich with the most luxuriant tropical vegetation, the sweetest spot of all being around the Lake of Sodom, at that time probably a sweet-water lake. By the waters of Sodom rich cities had sprung up, which, alas! were also the seat of the most terrible corruption." — *Edersheim.* Abraham, on the contrary, made the wise choice of the rugged hills of Judæa, settling at Hebron, one of the oldest cities of

the world, where, in the practice of honest toil under circumstances not too easy, and in surroundings that would not enervate, he made his home for the remainder of his days — such home as a wandering shepherd might have. It was an unworldly choice, and a very wise one, with immense results for the good not only of Abraham but of all the world.

ABRAHAM'S COURAGEOUS RESCUE. Chedorlaomer was king of Elam, a country east of Babylonia and north of the Persian Gulf. The Canaanitic princes ruling Sodom and Gomorrah and other cities of the Dead Sea region were his vassals for twelve years, but finally rebelled. Thereupon, with his own army and with allies, Chedorlaomer marched westward, came down southward from Damascus through the region east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, conquering tribe after tribe as he went, turned northward around the southern end of the Dead Sea, and came at last to the rebellious province. He defeated the Canaanitic forces in one battle, and ravaged their cities, returning northward with an immense amount of spoil. Foolish Lot was with the captives, and his goods also were carried off.

As soon as he learned the news, doughty Abraham, though about eighty-two years old, summoned 318 of his own men, and added bodies of warriors furnished by Amorite chiefs, with whom he was on friendly terms. Geikie thinks the force he thus obtained numbered about a thousand. Pursuing hotly with these, he overtook the invaders at Dan, in the extreme north of Palestine, divided his little army to make it seem larger, and made a surprise attack by night. He routed the enemy, though they greatly outnumbered his own men, and followed them as far as Hobah near Damascus. Abraham returned in triumph with Lot and the other captives and their goods, and refused the reward which the king of Sodom pressed upon him.

Genesis 14, which gives the account of this event, was for a long time ridiculed by infidels as pure myth, but now "this chapter in Genesis is acknowledged by all scholars of every shade of belief as the most important fragment of ancient history in the world." — *William H. Thomson.* It discloses the strength of Elam, the most ancient of conquering powers, and throws a flood of light on the times in which Abraham lived.

ABRAHAM'S WONDERFUL COVENANT. Perhaps Abraham was anxious for fear Chedorlaomer might return and avenge his defeat, and Jehovah gave him a comforting vision to reassure him. In that vision God said, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." At the same time God renewed his promise that Abraham should become the ancestor of a great people, and "in order to ratify his promise by the most solemn religious sanction possible, he bade him divide certain victims (the two portions probably being intended to represent the two contracting parties); and at nightfall he caused the divine presence to pass between them, to symbolize, probably, the assumption on his part of the obligation involved." — *Prof. George L. Robinson.* It was one of the most striking scenes in all the Bible history, and was typical of the entire life of Abraham, the Man of the Covenant.

ABRAHAM'S HALFWAY PRAYERS. The Dead Sea and the River Jordan occupy the most remarkable chasm in the earth's surface. The Dead Sea, with an area of 300 square miles, is at its surface 1,292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and its greatest depth carries it 1,278 feet further down; this is ten miles south of the mouth of the Jordan. There is every evidence that this chasm was caused by an earth convulsion on a gigantic scale, with terrible rendings of the rocks.

The region abounds in earthquakes to this day. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah seems to have been caused by an earthquake, accompanied by a fearful storm of lightning and tempest. "Fire from above might kindle the layers of asphalt with which the plain abounded, and tremblings of the ground might aid the storm-flood in overwhelming everything." — *Cunningham Geikie.* In this disaster Lot lost all his goods, together with his wife.

The account of the disclosure of the coming event to Abraham, and his prayers for the safety of Sodom, is full of instruction for us. It teaches us to pray for all sinners, as Abraham interceded not merely for Lot but for all the inhabitants of Sodom. We learn from Abraham's increasing importunity that "the more God gives, the more does the true suppliant expect and crave. Again, we learn the precious lesson that prayer for others is a real power, and does bring down blessings and avert evils." — *Alexander Maclaren.* Lot was saved, in answer to Abraham's petition. But at the same time we have here the warning not to stop too soon in our prayers, for Abraham might have gone on and asked that Sodom should be preserved for the sake of Lot alone, and his prayer would probably have been granted. His faith stopped short with ten, and Sodom was destroyed.

17. By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son;*

18. *Even he* to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19. Accounting that God *is* able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back.

Abraham's Miraculous Blessing. Abraham was a hundred years old and his wife Sarah was over ninety, when her son Isaac, the long-desired child of the covenant, was born. There is never any loss in awaiting God's time; Isaac, the noble, peaceful, quietly efficient man, was well worth waiting for. Fourteen or fifteen years before, Sarah had grown impatient and had lost her faith. According to the custom of the times she had bidden Abraham marry her own servant, Hagar, an Egyptian woman, and thus obtain a son. This boy, whom Hagar bore to Abraham, was Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabians. We are here at the beginning of Mohammedanism, the great power which is to give Christianity its most strenuous battle. This act of Sarah's broke up the peace of the household, and led to quarrels and cruelty.

The Three Angels Visit Abraham. Schnorr.

It was hard for Abraham, still harder for Sarah, to realize that God's promises are fulfilled to the last letter, but in God's good time.

III. **ABRAHAM'S OBEDIENCE**, Gen. 22 : 1—25 : 11; Heb. 11 : 17–19. The glorious narrative of Genesis 22 should be read by teacher and pupil. It is not only the culmination of Abraham's life of faith, but it is a marvellous foregleam, thus early in human history, of the sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary.

17. **By faith Abraham, being tried.** Tested, for the one purpose which God has in all such testings, that Abraham might be brought nearer to himself. **Offered up Isaac.** Isaac, the child of the covenant, the boy on whom Abraham's hopes all centered, the son who was to become the father of God's chosen people. God asks the yielding up of our best, not our second-best. **Yea, he that had gladly received the promises.** They had been repeated over and over, to prolong Abraham's faith through the lengthening years. **Was offering up his only begotten son.** There was Ishmael, the son of Hagar, but God had told Abraham that the covenant was not to be fulfilled in him; Ishmael was the child of unfaith, Isaac the child of faith. This verse reaches forward not only in its thought but in its very phraseology to John 3 : 16, and binds the two Testaments together.

18. **Even he** (that is, Abraham) **to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.** The quotation is from Gen. 21 : 12 : "In Isaac's descendants will be those who shall be called Abraham's children," and not in Ishmael's descendants.

19. **Accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead.** As Christ was raised from the dead, and became the earnest of our resurrection. **From whence he did also in a figure receive him back.** "In a figure" is inserted because Isaac did not actually die, but Abraham had yielded him up to death. It was from this absolute surrender that the faith-filled patriarch received his son back. "God's great proof of us is in a manner the precise opposite of that to which he subjected Abraham. God proved Abraham by testing whether he had sufficient faith in God to sacrifice

his son at God's command. God proves us by testing whether we have sufficient faith in God to believe that he loves us well enough to sacrifice his Son for us." — *Hastings.*

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH. "The burial of Sarah throws out into a strong relief the figure of the patriarch amidst the men around him. His first and only possession of the land of Canaan is the cave of Machpelah, which he purchases of Ephron the Hittite, that he may lay in it the body of the dead wife who through so many eventful years had been the faithful sharer of his ventures and his wanderings, and whom God himself had changed from being Sarai the quarrelsome into Sarah the princess. Eight and thirty years later the stone was rolled from the cavern's mouth, and Isaac and Ishmael bore another honored corpse into the shelter of that tomb. Abraham was laid beside Sarah his wife. The long toil, the many ventures, the faithful service, the joyful communing with Jehovah — these were over. The mighty faith which God's love had kindled, which many prayers had fed, which many trials had perfected, had lasted on even to the end." — *Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.*

Door to the Cave of Machpelah Containing the Graves of Abraham and Sarah.

LESSONS FROM FAITHFUL ABRAHAM. "Abraham is significant to Israelites, — he is their common ancestor. Abraham is the headwaters, so to speak, of the river of Hebrew existence. He is significant to Mohammedans as the earliest prophet of their faith, as Mohammed is the latest. He is significant to Christians as the first forerunner of Jesus: 'Abraham saw my day and was glad.' He is significant to all who have conducted great migrations, among them the Pilgrims and the Puritans who came to this country; they, too, went out not knowing whither they went. He is significant to college men, making a great start; to young men going into business, moving out of the quiet harbor upon a serious career; to lovers about to found their new home; to all beginners in all lines of life. He is significant because he is a great beginner, and because he began in the power of a great conception!" — *Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D.*

"The Hebrew patriarchs had small libraries, I think, if any, yet they represent to our imaginations a very complete idea of manhood; and I think, if we could ask Abraham to dine with us men of letters next Saturday, we should feel honored by his company." — *Oliver Wendell Holmes, in "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."*

Florence Nightingale once gave this as the secret of her successful life: "I have never refused God anything." That was the secret of Abraham's success.

"A guest at Luther's table remarked that a general like Scipio would be the right leader against the Turks. The Doctor replied: 'If only we had Abraham! He could send four thousand angels in advance, as he and his servants defeated four kings. Ah, that was a great man and God's good friend." — *E. Kroker.*

"The sacrifice of Isaac was the supreme act of Abraham's life. The devotedness that made the sacrifice, the trust in God that endured when even such a sacrifice was demanded, the justification of this trust by the event, and the affectionate fatherly acknowledgment with which God gloried in the man's loyalty and strength of character, come home to every heart in its time of need." — *Hastings.*

## LESSON III. — April 15.

## JOSEPH THE PRESERVER OF HIS PEOPLE. — Genesis 30 : 22–24; 37 : 2—50 : 26.

**(A Survey of Joseph's Life.)**

**PRINT Gen. 45 : 3–15.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.* — Ex. 20 : 12.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 20 : 1–9.
**Reference Material** : Josh. 24 : 32; Ps. 105 : 16–22; John 4 : 5; Acts 7 : 9–14; Heb. 11 : 21, 22.
**Primary Topic** : Joseph Forgiving His Brothers.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 37 : 3–28; 45 : 1–15. Print Gen. 37 : 23, 24, 28; 45 : 4–11.
**Memory Verse** : Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Matt. 6 : 12.
**Junior Topic** : Joseph, the Forgiving Brother.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 37; 45 : 1–15. Print Gen. 37 : 23, 24, 28; 45 : 4–11.
**Memory Verse** : Matt. 6 : 12.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Joseph as Son and Brother.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Inspiring Example of Joseph.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** pass over lightly the story of the brothers' cruelty and Joseph's sufferings, and emphasize Joseph's forgiveness. Even the youngest pupil, however, should have the wonderful story in outline. Tell it to the children and then have them tell it back to you, each taking a turn and telling a portion of it.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes** will emphasize the inspiring example of Joseph as a good son and helpful brother, and they also will review the entire story. You may divide it up in advance into "chapters," using the divisions given here, and asking each pupil to write a "chapter" and read it to the class,

**The Older Classes** will draw from the story of Joseph many lessons for to-day — lessons relating to family life, social relations, the functions of government, and conservation. Even prison management may be discussed in connection with this essentially modern story. Assign these different phases of the subject to different pupils in advance.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Joseph was born (Beecher) B.C. 1752, was taken to Egypt B.C. 1736, became prime minister B.C. 1723, became known to his brothers B.C. 1715, died B.C. 1643.

**Place.** — Hebron, Joseph's boyhood home. It is probable that the capital of Egypt in Joseph's time was On (Heliopolis), ten miles northeast of modern Cairo.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Family life in patriarchal days.
Points of likeness between Joseph's story and Christ's.
Joseph as son.
Joseph as brother.
Joseph as servant.
Joseph as statesman.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Joseph, Loving and Leading.**

I. Joseph, the Open-hearted, Gen. 37.
The coat of many colors.
The wonderful dream.
The murderous plot.
Sold into slavery.

II. Joseph, the Faithful Helper, Gen. 39—41.
Helpful to Potiphar.
Helpful to the jailer.
Helpful to the chief butler and baker.
Helpful to Pharaoh.
Helpful to the Egyptians.
Helpful to all countries.

III. Joseph, the Loving Brother and Son, Gen. 42—50.
Testing his brothers.
Forgiving his brothers.
Caring for his brothers and father.
Receiving his father's blessing.
Reassuring his brothers.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Life of Joseph on Ghiberti's gate, Florence. Joseph's Dream, by Rembrandt. The Sale of Joseph, by Bonifazio, Overbeck, Flandrin. Joseph in Prison, by Schadow. Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dream, by Cornelius. Joseph Recognized by His Brethren, by Cornelius.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Books on Joseph, by F. B. Meyer and William M. Taylor. Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament.* Wells's *Bible Miniatures.* Vaughan's *Temple Sermons.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Dods's *Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.* Selby's *The God of the Patriarchs.* Greenhough's *Half-hours in God's Older Picture Gallery.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Miller's *Devotional Hours with the Bible.* Rowlands in *Men of the Old Testament.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible.* Black's "*According to My Gospel*" and *The Gift of Influence. Joseph and His Brothers,* a long dramatic poem by Charles Wells. Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel.* J. R. Miller's *The Story of Joseph. Rankin's Character Studies in the Old Testament.*

I. **JOSEPH, THE OPEN-HEARTED BOY,** Gen. 37. Most persons will name the story of Joseph as their favorite among all the Old Testament narratives. A company of Boston authors once voted what story of all they had read they regarded as the best from a literary viewpoint, and when the ballots were opened it was found that all had voted for the story of Joseph. "Let us ponder together the story of Joseph; and as we do, we shall get many a foreshadowing of Him who was cast into the pit of death, but who now sits at the right hand of Power, a Prince and a Saviour." — *F. B. Meyer.*

THE COAT OF MANY COLORS. Of Jacob's twelve sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun (with the daughter, Dinah), were children of his wife Leah; Gad and Asher were the sons of Leah's handmaid, Zilpah; Dan and Naphtali were the sons of Rachel's handmaid, Bilhah; only Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of his beloved wife Rachel, and of Jacob's old age. Therefore he loved Joseph (and also Benjamin) more than the other sons, and unwisely showed his partiality by various special kindnesses to the lad. For one thing, he distinguished him by a certain "long garment with sleeves, such as that worn by persons of distinction." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett.* "The ordinary tunic reached only to the knees, and had no sleeves." — *Prof. H. G. Mitchell.* This may also have been gayly embroidered, and thus have deserved the description, "coat of many colors."

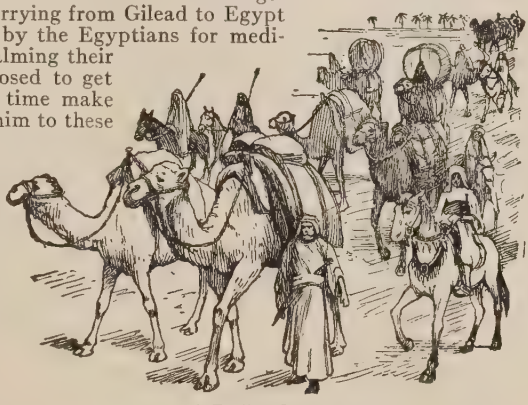
It is not at all surprising that this favoritism should have aroused against Joseph the enmity of his brothers, especially of the sons of the slave-wives, Bilhah and Zilpah. This hostility was increased when the lad (he was seventeen years old at the time), in loyalty to his father, told Jacob of the misdeeds of these brothers, committed in distant pastures where he was working with them. This was not mere mischief-making. Doubtless the young men were doing what would wrong Jacob, and what Jacob ought to know about. It required genuine heroism for the young fellow to report their iniquities.

THE WONDERFUL DREAM. The hatred of Joseph's brothers toward him was increased by a strange dream: he and his brothers were binding sheaves of grain in the harvest field when their sheaves marched up to his sheaf and humbly bowed down to the ground before it! Then Joseph had another dream still stranger, and taking in his father and his mother: he was a star, and the sun and moon and eleven stars came and bowed down before his star! He was an open-minded innocent lad, so he told the two dreams freely. He had no jealousy, and would have been just as well satisfied if in the dream his sheaf and his star had bowed down to another's, say Judah's or Benjamin's. His father rebuked him and his brothers hated him, for they evidently were believers in dreams as prophecies; but if the dreams were true pictures of the future, why did they not rejoice in Joseph's coming eminence, rather than blame him for not keeping the good news to himself? In a true family all "in honor prefer one another."

THE MURDEROUS PLOT. It was natural that Jacob should send the trusty boy to see how his brothers were getting on with the flock of sheep they were tending. They had evidently gone far from pasturage. Had hostile Canaanites set upon them? Had wild animals attacked them? Were they in any need? Joseph must have been a brave and self-reliant youth as well as a trusty one, or his father would never have sent him far north to Shechem. Even there he did not find his brothers, but was directed to Dothan (now Dotan), thirteen miles farther north. The brothers saw him coming from afar, probably recognizing him by the well-known and hated coat, and as he was approaching they formed a cruel plot to slay him. Reuben alone protested, and proposed instead that the boy should be thrown into "a pit, one of the rock-hewn cisterns, shaped like a bottle, which are found everywhere in the country, and which have often been used for dungeons." — *Mitchell.* This plan was obviously safer than the other, for it would seem that Joseph had fallen in accident-

ally ; and at the same time it was a more cruel plan, leaving the lad to starve in the wilderness. But Reuben had better thoughts, intending to return and rescue his brother.

Sold into Slavery. The deed was accomplished, and Reuben seems to have withdrawn on some errand. While he was gone a caravan of Ishmaelites or Midianites (perhaps both, or perhaps the names were interchangeable) passed on their camels, carrying from Gilead to Egypt various gums and spices used by the Egyptians for medicine, for perfume, and for embalming their dead. It was Judah who proposed to get rid of Joseph and at the same time make gain out of the deed by selling him to these travelling merchants, that they might carry him to Egypt and sell him there into slavery. No sooner said than done, and Joseph was sold for twenty silver shekels, the regular value of a youth of five to twenty years (Lev. 27 : 5). Reuben returned and mourned over the empty pit ; but the brothers dipped Joseph's princely coat in goat's blood, and took it to Jacob, pretending to have found it, and to see in it proof that their brother had been slain and devoured by a wild beast. The father's mourning for his beloved son must have touched their hearts, if they were not hardened beyond the point of remorse.



A Trading Caravan.

" Joseph was now to be plunged into the most corrupt society that rotted in that age on the face of the earth. And had he not come into that pollution straight out of a sevenfold furnace of sanctifying sorrow, Joseph would no more have been heard of." — *Alexander Whyte.*

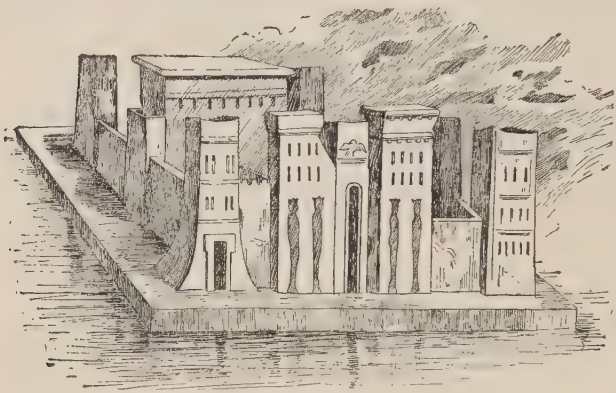
II. **JOSEPH, THE FAITHFUL HELPER**, Gen. 39—41. Helpful to Potiphar. The keynote of Joseph's life was his helpfulness. He had been as a boy truly helpful to his father. Now, even when he was a slave in Egypt, the same quality appears, and rises to influence as it always does. His master was Potiphar, the name meaning "He whom the Sun-God (Ra) gave." His exact office is doubtful : he might be the captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard, or, as some translate it, " the chief of the butchers." At any rate, Joseph was set to work in Potiphar's private residence, where his fidelity became so manifest that he was promoted to be steward, having entire charge of the house, and relieving his busy master of all care there.

" If he was to be a slave, Joseph was determined he would be the best of slaves, and what he was required to do he would do with his might and with his heart." — *William M. Taylor.* If you have Joseph's spirit, you can bring out of your greatest disadvantages more blessings than others extract from their greatest good fortune.

Helpful to the Jailer. Potiphar's home being in Joseph's charge in all its parts, and women in Egypt associating freely with men, Potiphar's wife saw much of him. He had inherited his mother's beauty, and she fell in love with him. As he indignantly spurned her evil advances, she tried to ruin him by a false accusation made to her husband. Potiphar evidently did not believe her, or he would have killed Joseph at once ; but he had not strength of mind to oppose her entirely, so he compromised by throwing Joseph into the king's prison. In prison, however, as in slavery, Joseph's shining qualities could not be hidden. He was so cheerful, so brave, and so trusty that the jailer came to rely on him to help him with the other prisoners, and at last made him virtually his deputy. Some parts in the narrative indicate that Potiphar himself was the jailer.

Helpful to the Chief Butler and Baker. " The superintendents of the royal cellar and the royal bakehouse were high officials of the Egyptian court, ' Lord High Butler ' and ' Lord High Baker.' " — *New Century Bible.* These two officers had incurred Pharaoh's displeasure, and had been committed to the king's prison. There they had two strange dreams, which greatly disturbed them. Dreams were highly valued and much sought for in Egypt, the Egyptians wasting much time and

thought in the interpretation of them as prophecies of the future. Joseph, ready to help as always, was enabled by God to see in these two dreams a clear vision of the chief baker, that he should be executed within three days, and of the chief butler, that within the same period he should be restored to the king's favor. This actually happened just as Joseph had said, but the chief butler speedily forgot the fellow prisoner who had done him this kindness.



White Castle in Which Joseph Was Confined at Memphis.
(From the famous Mosaic Pavement.)

HELPFUL TO PHARAOH. In the end the chief butler's ingratitude was an advantage to Joseph, for it delayed his mention of Joseph until Pharaoh had his perplexing dream of the seven fat cows that came up out of the sacred River Nile, whose annual overflow was the source of Egypt's fertility. After them came up seven lean cows, which ate up the seven fat ones. Next came a dream of seven full ears of grain on one stalk, followed by seven ears of thin and blasted grain which ate up the seven full ears. When the Egyptian wise men — court dream interpreters — could make nothing of these dreams, and Pharaoh was greatly troubled, the chief butler remembered Joseph and his skill in explaining dreams. So Joseph was brought from prison, and, after modestly disclaiming all personal wisdom, said that "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Then he explained that the two dreams meant the same thing, namely, that seven years of plenty were to be followed by seven years of famine. Then Joseph showed himself to be a statesman, daring to go on and give constructive advice : that the surplus grain of the seven good years should be carefully stored up as provision for the seven years of famine. Joseph's bearing and his evident wisdom and practical ability so impressed the king that he at once placed the young Hebrew in charge of the plan he had so boldly suggested, making him prime minister over the whole kingdom of Egypt. At the same time Pharaoh bestowed upon Joseph an Egyptian name and also an Egyptian wife, Asenath the daughter of Potiphera, who was priest of On, that is, of Heliopolis, the great seat of the worship of the sun-god and the leading Egyptian "theological seminary."

Obelisk at Heliopolis, or On.
This obelisk has been standing about four thousand years.

Thus at the age of thirty Joseph, in spite of terrible hindrances and calamities that would have crushed an ordinary man, had become second in the world's greatest nation, all because of his humble trust in God and his cheerful readiness to be of service to his fellow men.

Helpful to the Egyptians. Thus began Joseph's great work for food-conservation, a work abundantly illustrated and often referred to during the World War. Very likely the prime minister put into force in Egypt rules for the saving of food which were quite similar to those so efficiently enforced in the United States by Herbert Hoover and his helpers. An enormous quantity of grain was thus stored up during the seven years of plenty, and gathered into vast granaries, one for each city.

Helpful to All Countries. Then came the seven terrible years of famine, a period of crop-failures not only in Egypt but in all the neighboring countries, in all the comparatively small part of the earth known to the ancients. Joseph was now the great man of the world. He had everything in his own hand, since men will give all they have to preserve their lives and the lives of their dear ones. Loyal to his master's interest, Joseph sold grain for money until he had received in the royal treasury all the money in Egypt (Gen. 47); then he bought all their cattle and all their land for food, and fixed upon the people heavy taxes for the future. Besides, he allowed other countries to avail themselves of his prudent stores, and sold to foreigners as well as to Egyptians. It was a gigantic "corner in wheat," and in taking advantage of this unique opportunity, not for himself but for Pharaoh, Joseph was merely strengthening the power of authority, and building up organized government, a step toward the civilization which we enjoy to-day.

Semitic Traders Bringing Their Wares to Egypt.
(A picture from the Egyptian monuments.)
From "The Standard Bible Dictionary," Funk and Wagnalls Company.

"We can do all things with the spirit of a king, and that is the right and only way of becoming kingly and getting promotion. Get to feel, as Joseph did, that God is your Master, and that he will pay well at last if no others do." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

III. **JOSEPH, THE LOVING BROTHER AND SON**, Gen. 42—50. Testing His Brothers. The famine extended to Canaan, and seized upon Jacob and his sons and their families. With characteristic energy Jacob sent ten of his sons down to Egypt to obtain food, keeping at home Benjamin alone because of his youth. The ten were sent because all of them would be needed to manage the animals to be used for transporting the expected grain, and protecting them and their precious burden from desert robbers. It was a journey of about two hundred miles and would require about twelve days.

When the ten strangers from Canaan made application for grain, Joseph knew them at once, but they did not recognize him, changed by time as he was, in foreign attire, and in that unsuspected position. Then began a series of tests, to learn whether his brothers had changed their characters, or were still cruel and jealous. Discovering by their talk among themselves that Reuben, the oldest, had sought to save him, Joseph made the next oldest, Simeon, a prisoner, and held him as a hostage until they should prove their story, which he pretended to disbelieve, by bringing back his dear younger brother, Benjamin. Besides, he filled them with doubt and foreboding by putting all their money back in their sacks with the grain.

At first Jacob stoutly refused to allow them to take Benjamin with them when they must return for more grain, though Reuben offered his two sons as surety, and Judah pledged his honor to bring Benjamin back in safety. But the pressure of famine was sore, and Jacob at last allowed Benjamin to go.

At sight of his own brother Joseph could hardly restrain himself, but he would test his half-brothers a little further. He amazed them by giving them a banquet at which he arranged them in the exact order of their ages. Then he sent them away

3. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5. And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

---

with each man's money in his sack, while in Benjamin's sack he had ordered his own silver cup to be placed. This gave Joseph an excuse to arrest the eleven brothers, to search their sacks, and, when the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, to condemn the youth to the same slavery in Egypt into which he had himself been sold so many years before. Then Judah made one of the most moving speeches recorded in all the Bible, urging that Joseph should accept him as a slave instead of his young brother and let Benjamin return to comfort the aged Jacob. The simple, heartfelt eloquence of this plea has never been surpassed. It was convincing proof that one at least of the brothers had a good heart.

FORGIVING HIS BROTHERS. This scene is among the most affecting of all Scripture scenes. It touches all hearts, and points an irresistible moral. With true delicacy Joseph bade his servants withdraw from the room, that he and his brothers might be unrestrained in their expressions of profound emotion.

3. **And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph.** Nothing could be more simple than this announcement, nothing more terrifying to the guilty brothers. **Doth my father yet live?** That was his one great anxiety, his first question. **And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.** "No wonder they were troubled. Remember how they had treated him. Sins once committed remain bitter facts in our lives ever after. They embitter our days and nights. They make cowards of us. Then we must some day face them all." — *J. R. Miller.*

4. **Come near to me, I pray you.** "That invitation is a beautiful touch. We can fancy how tender the accents, and how, with some lightening of fear, but still hesitatingly and ashamed, the shepherds, unaccustomed to courtly splendors, approached." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.** "There is much force in the assurance that he was still their brother." — *Ellicott.* Joseph might easily have refused to recognize the ties of kindred which they had themselves so cruelly disregarded.

5. **And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves.** They had done well to feel the depths of remorse and self-condemnation, but Joseph could now relieve them of that. He could not have done it safely until they showed that they were penitent. "How sure we are of our own forgiveness from God, how certain we are that we are made in his image, when we forgive heartily and out of hand one who has wronged us." — *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

"Be yours such thought as Joseph felt,
When all his haughty brethren knelt,
As visioned dreams foretold,
And found, in that Egyptian lord,
The brother whom their hearts abhorred,
The slave whom they had sold.

"A twofold power forgiveness hath,
She softens hearts, she tempers wrath,
And she is ever strong
To call a blessing down from heaven;
Christ said, 'If ye would be forgiven,
Forgive your brother's wrong.'" — *Cecil Francis Alexander.*

*Illustration.* "What a commentary here upon the conduct of man. A dying man who had not spoken to a brother deacon for years was told he could not be saved unless he was willing to be reconciled to his brother, and was asked if he should be sent for. Reluctant assent was given, but when the man came he coldly took him by the hand, saying, 'If I get well, this all counts for nothing.' The miserable wretch!" — *Rev. M. B. Wharton, D.D.*

**For God did send me before you to preserve life.** "Observe the providence: had Joseph not been sold, thousands of Egyptians would have died, and Jacob's house

6. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest.

7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.

8. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

9. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not;

10. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Gō′-shĕn, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11. And there will I nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine; lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast.

12. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

---

would, humanly speaking, have been exterminated." — *Prof. Marcus Dods.* "A God who thinks it worth while to bring good out of evil, to manipulate this accursed thing into its opposite, such a God must be life to know." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

6. **For . . . there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest.** Therefore Joseph had been Pharaoh's prime minister for nine years and was at this time thirty-nine years old.

7. **And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth.** "During the seven years' famine many races probably dwindled away, and the Hebrews, as mere sojourners in Canaan, would have been in danger of total extinction." — *Ellicott.* **And to save you alive by a great deliverance.** A deliverance testifying to the great mercy and power of God, but especially a deliverance great in its results, preserving not a mere handful, but those who were to become a great nation.

8. **So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.** "This model premier knew that providence never attains its final end on the worldly prosperity of an individual or a family. When its chooses out some man for its special care, it is that he may become an instrument of help and salvation to others." — *Thomas G. Selby.* **And he hath made me a father to Pharaoh.** "Father" here means adviser or counsellor, a not uncommon title of Eastern prime ministers or viziers. **And lord of all his house.** Both because of his own office and because he was the son-in-law of the high priest. **And ruler over all the land of Egypt.** "It is evident that faith in God was the source of Joseph's strength, the power which kept him true, which swayed amid the breeze of his most changeful career. He believed in God." — *Hastings.* This belief was the secret of his success. "It was Joseph's confidence in God which bred in him his strength of character, and which moved him to constant service. This is the foundation of all the rest." — *Prof. Hugh Black.*

9. **Haste ye, and go up to my father.** "A ruler to the Egyptians, Joseph was and would still be a son to Jacob; for he carried to his throne, unsophisticated and unaltered, the heart that beat beneath the coat of many colors." — *William M. Taylor.* **And say . . . Come down unto me, tarry not.** Jacob was only a plain shepherd, but Joseph was not ashamed to bring him into his own court surroundings and even to present him to Pharaoh. Joseph's own most important duties would prevent his going after his father, which we may be sure he longed to do.

10. **And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen.** A very fertile region, about nine hundred square miles in area, east of the Bubastic or eastern branch of the Nile at the Delta, reaching to the region traversed to-day by the Suez Canal. **And thou shalt be near unto me.** This implies that the capital of the nation, where of course Joseph would dwell, was near the land of Goshen.

11. **And there will I nourish thee.** This verse "indicates that Joseph was content to take one step at a time, and had not determined that Israel should settle in Egypt, but only that they should remain till the famine was over." — *Prof. Marcus Dods.*

12. **And behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin.** Benjamin

13. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen: and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

---

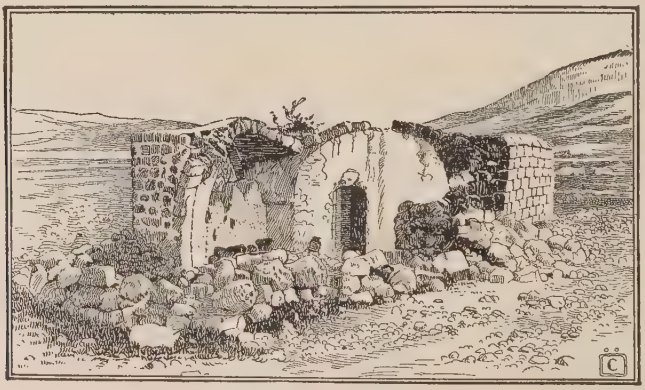
alone was Joseph's own brother, the child of Rachel; the rest were half-brothers. **That it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.** That is, I myself, your brother Joseph, and not merely an Egyptian ruler.

13. **And ye shall tell my father of all my glory.** "The powerful ruler lays his dignity at his father's feet. No elevation will ever make a true son forget his reverence for his father." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **And ye shall haste.** After all those years of waiting and longing, Joseph could not restrain his impatience.

14. **And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept.** He was weeping for joy, and also for sorrow because of the long and needless separation. **And Benjamin wept upon his neck.** We must remember that Orientals are far more demonstrative than the colder Occidentals.

15. **And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them.** "The kiss is common in Eastern lands in salutation, etc., on the cheek, the forehead, the beard, the hands, the feet, but not (in Palestine) the lips. In the Bible there is no sure instance of the kiss in ordinary salutation. There is reason to believe that, as a rule, men only thus greeted men, and women, women." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* **And after that his brethren talked with him.** The Latin translation (the Vulgate) is more vivid: "dared to talk with him."

CARING FOR HIS BROTHERS AND FATHER. Joseph's popularity was shown by the pleasure felt by Pharaoh and his household when they learned that Joseph's brothers had arrived; they expected to have more helpers like Joseph. So Pharaoh gladly expedited the migration of Jacob and his clan from Canaan to Egypt, providing carts and provision, to which Joseph added fresh clothing for all and three hundred silver shekels for Benjamin, worth a little less than $200, but in purchasing power worth ten times that sum. To Jacob was sent a goodly supply of the best food, that he and his might have ample nourishment on the way down to Egypt. So the aged patriarch made the long journey to Egypt, cheered on his way by a glorious renewal



Tomb of Joseph at Shechem.

of God's promise to make his family a great nation. Joseph received his father with deep affection, obtained for him a hearty welcome from Pharaoh, and got permission for Jacob and his sons to live in the rich land of Goshen, where Joseph kept kindly watch over them, and saw that they lacked nothing.

RECEIVING HIS FATHER'S BLESSING. One of the most tender and touching scenes in the Bible is that of Jacob on his deathbed blessing Joseph and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph's sons are solemnly adopted into the chosen family,

though their mother was an Egyptian. For Ephraim especially, though the younger, high power and eminence are predicted, as really came to pass. Most fitting is the dying patriarch's summary of Joseph's life and character (Gen. 49 : 22–26), for Joseph had indeed been " a fruitful bough," and, though he suffered much persecution, and " the archers sorely grieved him," yet " his bow abode in strength " through the favor of " the Mighty One of Jacob."

Reassuring His Brothers. After Jacob died, and his body had been buried in Canaan by the side of Abraham, Sarah, and Rachel, his brothers had fresh remembrance of all the harm they had done to Joseph, and feared that, now the restraint of his old father's presence was removed, the premier of Egypt would take vengeance upon them for all his wrongs. How quick they were to judge others by themselves, and how poorly, even yet, they understood their great-hearted brother ! The words of Joseph, when they humbly sought his forgiveness, are well worthy of study by all who like him have been greatly wronged. They do not explain away the sin, they do not excuse it, but they comfort the repentant sinners by pointing out God's providence which has overruled it all for good. " Oh, that we might love and forgive like this ! It is possible on one condition only, namely, that we open our hearts for the entrance and indwelling of Him who, so long before his incarnation, had already found a home beneath the doublet of this great Egyptian statesman." — *F. B. Meyer.*

" Let us learn from all this story of Joseph to be calm in the midst of all that is mysterious in the government of the world — of all that is baffling in the events of history — and rest assured that infinite wisdom is at the heart of things, and that, though slowly, yet surely, the world is advancing toward that happy consummation, when '*peace*' shall be '*as a river*' and '*righteousness as the waves of the sea.*' " — *Principal David Rowlands.*

## LESSON IV. — April 22.

## MOSES: LIBERATOR AND LAWGIVER. — Exodus 2:1—19:25; 32:1—33:23; Deuteronomy 34:1–8.

(A Survey of Moses' Life.)

**PRINT Ex. 14:10, 13–22.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah.* — Ex. 14:13.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 70 : 1–5.
**Reference Material** : Deut. 3 : 23–28 ; Ps. 105 : 23–45 ; 106 : 7–33 ; Matt. 17 : 3 ; Acts 7 : 17–44 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 7–13 ; Heb. 11 : 23–29.
**Primary Topic** : Moses, the Boy Whom God Saved.
**Lesson Material** : Ex. 1 : 22 ; 2 : 1–10.
**Memory Verse** : Trust in him at all times. Ps. 62 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : Moses Leads Israel through the Red Sea.
**Lesson Material** : Ex. 14 : 10–22.
**Memory Verse** : Certainly I will be with thee. Ex. 3 : 12.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Moses the Great Leader.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Character of Moses.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** study the lesson of the saving of the baby Moses. The sand table may be used, a piece of mirror for the water, stiff green paper for the rushes, and a toy basket, with a tiny doll in it, resting on the " water " under the " rushes."

**The Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Classes** may be asked to write little " lives " of Moses in three chapters, each describing the events of forty years. Tell them you will decide by lot who is to read in the class his first chapter, who his second, and who his third.

**The Young People and Adults** will have a succession of speakers, or essayists, one of whom will outline very briefly the life of Moses, and the others the various aspects of his character, as scholar, author, patriot, executive, lawgiver, statesman, general, leader of men, organizer, friend of God. At the close the teacher will compare Moses with other great men.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Moses was born (Beecher) B.C. 1578 ; went to Midian B.C. 1539 ; returned to Egypt B.C. 1499 ; the exodus B.C. 1498 ; death of Moses B.C. 1459.

**Place.** — Northeastern Egypt, western arm of the Red Sea, the Sinai region, Kadesh-Barnea, Mt. Pisgah in Moab.

Moses' Well at the foot of Mount Nebo.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The date of Moses.
The writings of Moses.
Moses compared with Paul.
The work of Moses as a statesman.
Moses as a religious leader.
The uniqueness of Moses.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT : Moses the Great Leader.

I. MOSES, THE COURTIER AND SHEPHERD, EX. 2 : 1—4 : 31.

A wonderful preservation.
A providential education.
A premature outbreak.
A wilderness training.
The call of the burning bush.

II. MOSES, THE DELIVERER, EX. 5 : 1—15 : 27.

The demand upon Pharaoh.
The ten plagues.
The passover night.
The exodus.

III. MOSES, THE STATESMAN, EX. 16 : 1—19 : 25; 32 : 1—33 : 23; DEUT. 34 : 1–8.

Perils of the journey.
The giving of the law.
The golden calf.
The founding of a nation.
Forty years of wandering.
The farewell address.
The Pisgah vision.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Moses, by Michelangelo, Fra Angelico, Baldovinetti, Raphael, Sargent. The Babe in the Bulrushes, by Raphael, Bonifazio, Tintoretto, Veronese, Poussin, Overbeck. Moses Overcoming the Egyptian, by Botticelli. Moses at the Burning Bush, by Botticelli, Burne-Jones, Flandrin. Moses Crossing the Red Sea, by Benozzo Gozzoli, Cosimo Roselli, Poussin. Moses Striking the Rock, by Ubertini, Tintoretto, Poussin, Murillo. Moses Lifting up the Serpent, by Benozzo Gozzoli, Michelangelo, Tintoretto, Rubens. Moses on the Mount, by Gozzoli, Roselli, Benjamin West. Moses Destroying the Tables of the Law, by Rembrandt, Roselli. Moses Looking at the Promised Land, by Roselli. Death of Moses, by Cabanel.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Taylor's *Moses the Law-giver.* Meyer's *Moses the Servant of God.* Rawlinson's *Moses, His Life and Times.* Stanley's *Lectures on the Jewish Church.* Whitham's *Old Testament History.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible.* Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament.* Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel.* Oosterzee's *Moses : a Biblical Study.* Pearse's *Moses: His Life and Its Lessons.* Carpenter's *The Burning Bush.* Brown's *The Land of Goshen.* Gibson's *The Mosaic Era.* Townsend in *Men of the Old Testament.* Trumbull's *Kadesh-Barnea.* Selby's *The God of the Patriarchs.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Wells's *Bible Miniatures.* Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament.* Banks's *On the Trail of Moses.*

I. **MOSES, THE COURTIER AND SHEPHERD,** EX. 2 : 1—4 : 31. A WONDERFUL PRESERVATION. When Jacob and his family went down into Egypt the country was ruled by foreign kings, the Hyksos or Shepherd dynasty, based on an inrush of nomadic tribes from the region northeast of Egypt. These were akin to the Israelites, and would be favorably disposed toward them. But after ruling for several centuries the Hyksos kings were driven out by a native uprising, and the Eighteenth Dynasty came to power. This dynasty was the ablest and most successful of Egyptian history, and the Pharaoh of the oppression, Rameses II., was one of the strongest monarchs that ever ruled Egypt. He reigned for sixty-seven years, extended his sway far into Asia to the east and Africa to the south, left monuments bearing his name all the way from near Beirut in Syria to Napata in Ethiopia, erected great temples, and built entire cities for grain repositories.

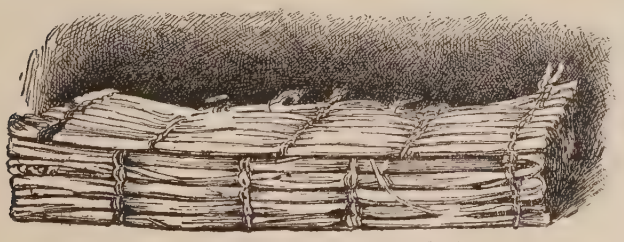
Under the Hyksos kings the Israelites, east of the Delta, had grown to be a numerous people, rich and strong, but still held themselves apart from the Egyptians. Rameses II. felt that they were too powerful, and that, if another Hyksos invasion should come from the east, the Israelites might side with the invaders against the natives. Therefore he determined to destroy the tribe, or at least render them in-

capable of an uprising, and this he did by forcing them away from their free life as shepherds, and compelling them to do work which they detested, to labor under severe taskmasters as slaves building his vast store cities. Finally, when these measures did not succeed in reducing the strength of the Israelites, Rameses went so far as to order all their male babies killed as soon as they were born.

Profile of Rameses II.
(From a photograph of the mummy.)

Such were the wretched conditions surrounding the birth of Moses, who was to become (with the exception of Paul) the greatest man of the Hebrew race. He was a Levite on the side both of his father, Amram, and of his mother, Jochebed. The pair had already a daughter, Miriam, and a son, Aaron. Moses was a beautiful baby, and his mother hid him from the cruel Egyptians as long as she could. But when he was three months old, and discovery seemed inevitable, she placed the lovely infant in a basket woven of papyrus reeds and coated with bitumen and pitch to make it water-tight, and committed it to a tangle of reeds on the bank of the Nile at the place where Princess Tharmuth, one of Pharaoh's fifty-seven daughters, was in the habit of bathing. It is one of the sweetest stories in all history,—how the princess found the babe, loved him at once and decided to adopt him, and how, on the advice of the quick-witted Miriam, she gave the child to his own mother to nurse. The name, Moses, which sounds like the Hebrew verb *mashah*, to draw out, was given the boy by the princess in commemoration of this series of events.

A Providential Education. We are told in Acts 7 : 22 that Moses "was instucted in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and we may be sure that his foster mother would give him the best of private tutors. Egypt was at this time the most learned nation on earth. "A good education was valued in ancient Egypt; and the actual education of an Egyptian of the better class comprised such things as moral duties and good manners, reading, writing, composition, and arithmetic."—*Driver*. In addition, Moses would learn astronomy (then chiefly astrology), music, geometry, and philosophy. His mind was loaded with an immense number of superstitions, myths, and magical formulæ, which he indignantly discarded. His clear mind and lofty soul were able to grasp the good that Egypt had to offer—its learning (far inferior to that of our grammar schools), and the not inconsiderable body of good sense in its laws. In addition, tradition says that Moses was trained as a soldier and won victories in war. All of this, in the course of providence, was turned to the best account by this marvellous man in his later life. He won a superb education, but his Egyptian teachers only began it. As in every other case, his chief education was what he gave himself.



Papyrus Basket from an Egyptian Tomb.

Probably the same kind as that in which the infant Moses was laid after his mother had covered the side and bottom with asphalt.

(From the Egyptian Exploration Fund.)

A PREMATURE OUTBREAK. Though educated as an Egyptian courtier, Moses never forgot his own people, and remained an Israelite at heart. Probably his father and mother saw to that. Doubtless he brooded much over the wrongs the Hebrews suffered, and he may have made many a protest that is not recorded. We only know that one day, when he saw an Egyptian taskmaster beating a Hebrew toiler, in hot anger he slew the Egyptian brute, and buried the dead body in the sand. What he had done became known, doubtless through the slave whom he had avenged ; and the next day, when Moses found two of the Hebrews fighting together and bade them cease, one of them impudently asked for his authority, and added, " Will you kill me, as you killed the Egyptian ? "

Moses. Michelangelo.
S. Pietro in Vincoli. Rome.

This churlish answer showed Moses to what a low condition slavery had brought his people, and moreover it proved that his deed was known. Indeed, Pharaoh soon sought to kill Moses, and the young patriot had to flee for his life. He fled eastward, beyond Sinai and the Red Sea, to the Midianites, an Arab tribe akin to the Hebrews. There he married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel (called also Jethro and Hobab) the chief priest of the tribe, who bore him a son named Gershom (a significant name sounding like the Hebrew for " sojourner ").

Thus Moses, as the result of yielding to a hasty impulse instead of governing his life by a steady principle, was exiled from the very people whom he longed to help, driven from the court and country where he had power and where he might perhaps have gained the vast influence which Joseph exerted, and compelled to change all his life plans in a day. This is what always happens when men take their lives in their own hands and refuse to await the wise course of God's providence. How much toil and fear might have been saved to Moses and his people if Moses had not slain that Egyptian taskmaster !

A WILDERNESS TRAINING. So this wise scholar and brave soldier settled down to care for his father-in-law's sheep, and spent in the wilderness the second forty years of his life. These years of quiet meditation gave him his most valuable education. They brought him near to God. They showed him what was eternal and what was only transient. In these years the immortal " Mosaic system " was first implanted in his mind by Jehovah, the system that was to become the foundation of the world's highest civilization and true religion. In these years the body of Moses, that may have been soft with Egyptian luxury, was hardened by outdoor labor, and he was thoroughly prepared, physically, mentally, and spiritually, for his incomparable life work, so that he could carry it on with abounding success though an old man over eighty when he entered upon it. Thus God overruled for good that rash act of his impulsive patriotism.

THE CALL OF THE BURNING BUSH. Finally, at the close of the forty years, the fire in Moses' heart still burning brightly, Jehovah's " angel " — that is, the manifestation of God himself — spoke to his servant and summoned him to his great life work. This occurred near Sinai (in the Horeb region), in the western range of the

Midianites. Jehovah showed himself as a mass of flame springing up from a thorny bush, perhaps an acacia, towering over it yet not consuming it. Calling "Moses! Moses!" the voice of the Eternal bade him first show reverence by removing his shoes as was customary on entering a temple. Then followed the great commission to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt to that very Sinai; the revelation of the name, "I AM" ("Yahweh," "Jehovah") by which the One God was to be made known to that land of many gods; the bestowal of miracle-working power upon the shepherd's staff which Moses carried; and, when Moses in his faithless timidity urged that he was no public speaker (he who proved to be one of the world's supreme orators!), the appointment of his elder brother Aaron to be his spokesman. This scene at the burning bush is one of the most powerful in all the Bible. For many centuries it has moved men, though conscious of their weakness as Moses was, to take up fearfully difficult tasks in the supernatural strength that God is eager to supply.

II. **MOSES, THE DELIVERER**, Ex. 5:1—15:27. The Demand upon Pharaoh. Now opens the third forty years of Moses' life, its final division, the years of glorious achievement after the long preparation. The first step made by Moses shows at once an advance in wisdom over his hasty youth: he gathered the elders of Israel, worked miracles before them as his credentials, and won their support for his proposed undertaking. Then, with his people this time back of him, he and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh.

The Pharaoh at this time may have been the thirteenth son of Rameses II., who succeeded him, Merenptah. The demand that Moses made upon him was a simple one, that the hard-working Hebrews should have a three-day holiday, and be allowed to go eastward into the desert to sacrifice to their God. But this would mean a stoppage of their labor, and Pharaoh indignantly refused. Moreover, in his wrath he made the tasks of his Israelite slaves still harder, compelling them to make bricks without furnishing them straw to bind the clay, forcing them to find the straw or stubble for themselves and yet hand in daily as many bricks as before. Thus, as often happens when attempts are made to right great wrongs, the hardship of the people was increased, and they turned upon Moses and Aaron with bitter reproaches. "See what you have brought upon us by your meddling!"

The Ten Plagues. Pharaoh was finally persuaded to let the Israelites go by ten plagues which Moses called down upon Egypt after ten successive refusals of the monarch. These plagues were increasingly severe. All were clearly supernatural, plain manifestations of the power of Jehovah to whom Moses attributed them, though all were based on natural phenomena of which they were intensifications. Thus the color of the Nile is a dull red between June and August, stained by the red marl of Abyssinia; but during the first plague it was changed to blood. Each year's inundation of the Nile brings with it myriads of frogs. The plague of lice (or gnats) may have been based on the mosquitoes which swarm when the Nile overflows. Flies, especially dog-flies, are a common pest in Egypt. The murrain or cattle plague occurs when the water of the Nile is low and impure. Boils and other skin eruptions are numerous in Egypt because of the great heat and the many unhealthy conditions. Thunder and hail are not common in Egypt, but most disastrous storms of the kind occur occasionally. Locusts do not visit Egypt very often, but they have been known to descend upon the land in immense swarms. Sand-storms sometimes sweep across the country, darkening the sun so that objects a few feet off cannot be seen. Finally, malignant plagues sometimes visit Egypt, and kill large numbers with startling suddenness. But, though thus the ten plagues were founded on calamities more or less familiar to Egyptians, they were miraculous in their severity, in their wide range, in their passing by the persons and possessions of the Hebrews, and in their coming just when and in the way that Moses foretold.

Further, it is to be noted that the plagues made clear the superiority of Jehovah over the gods of the Egyptians, the sacred Nile, the ibis worshipped as a frog-destroyer, the sacred cows, and so forth; besides, it showed how weak were the Egyptian magicians compared with Moses and his God.

And yet further we are to note the progressive hardening of Pharaoh's heart, as his obstinacy opposed itself to the cumulative evidence of Jehovah's truth and might, until at length the divine mercy was withdrawn from him and divine justice and wrath descended upon him, and from that point it is said no longer that he hardened his heart but that God hardened it, confirming the fate which Pharaoh had brought upon himself and his land. All of this is a perpetual parable of sin and its effects.

10. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.

13. And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

THE PASSOVER NIGHT. The great annual festival of the Jews, the passover, takes its name from the culmination of the ten plagues, the awful night when the death angel *passed over* the houses of the Hebrews, protected by the blood of the slain lamb on lintel and posts, and descended upon the firstborn of all the houses of the Egyptians. That crowning disaster broke Pharaoh's proud spirit, for his own son was dead with the rest, and not only did he allow the Israelites to go forth, but his people heaped upon them valuable gifts, which, however, were scanty payment for all their years of unrequited toil.

" Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," and the Great Atonement was made at the passover season, so that this famous commemoration feast of the Jews is doubly dear to the Christians, and is repeated by us at every celebration of the Lord's Supper.

THE EXODUS. The numbers of the Israelites involved in the exodus are given as about six hundred thousand men, which would mean, counting women and children, about two million souls. Their rendezvous was the city of Rameses, south of the land of Goshen, from which they marched east to Succoth, distant about ten miles, the evident intention of Moses being to go around the head of the Gulf of Suez and thus reach the wilderness. But the Lord bade Moses turn southward along the western side of the Gulf of Suez, while at the same time Pharaoh, unable to see his useful slaves departing, sent an army after them. There were the Israelites apparently caught in a trap, mountains to the right and ahead of them, the Egyptians behind them, and the seemingly impassable Gulf of Suez to their left. It was indeed a fearful situation for a nation of unarmed and undisciplined slaves.

10. **And when Pharaoh drew nigh.** " Pharaoh had gathered together six hundred of his best chariots, a force which constituted the very *élite* of his army : with these were united a large body of the ordinary class of chariots and a considerable force of foot. The array was felt to be irresistible." — *Rawlinson.* **The children of Israel lifted up their eyes.** They would of course be anxiously scanning the horizon for fear of pursuit. **And, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them.** " Over the ridges of the desert hills were seen the well-known horses, the terrible chariots of the Egyptian host." — *Dean Stanley.* **And they were sore afraid.** " They recalled the cities of the dead which they had often seen in the land of their bondage, and looked with horror at the prospect of their carcasses being left to whiten on the sand." — *William M. Taylor.* **And the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.** They also upbraided Moses, God's faithful servant (vs. 11, 12), charging him with leading them out to die, and reminding him that they had begged him before not to disturb their condition, in which at least they remained alive. The very words they quoted are not given elsewhere in the history, but their spirit is reflected in Ex. 5 : 21 ; 6 : 9.

13. **And Moses said unto the people.** Doubtless addressing their leaders, with instructions to pass the word along through the host. **Fear ye not.** How often this reassuring command was on the lips of Christ ! **Stand still.** Do not run away ; stand firm. At the same time, they were to hush their complaints and lamentations. " Be still, and know that I am God." **And see the salvation of Jehovah.** The deliverance that Jehovah would bring about. " Moses did not even yet know what the manner of the deliverance would be, whether hail would fall and destroy the Egyptian host, or the earth gape and swallow them up, or a pestilence fall upon them and lay them dead in their tents during the night ; but he was confident that, in one way or another, Israel would be delivered." — *Rawlinson.* **Which he will work for you to-day.** " Often God seems to lead his children into a wedge from which there is no escape. But it is perfectly right. It is a platform for the display of his almighty grace and power. Had you brought yourself into this position by your caprice, you had perished miserably ; but since he has brought you here, you have only to stand still and see his salvation, which is prepared as the morning." — *F. B. Meyer.* **For the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.**

14. Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

16. And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.

17. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall go in after them: and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18. And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19. And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them:

---

Seeing God's salvation implies seeing the last of the Egyptians. Thus when the soul truly sees God it sees an end of all its fears and troubles.

14. **Jehovah will fight for you.** This he did by overwhelming the Egyptians in the sea, and the Egyptians themselves owned his power; see verse 25. **And ye shall hold your peace.** "That is, do nothing: not even raise a war-cry. The Lacedæmonians sent as an aid to their ally not an army but only a general. This general (Ex. 15 : 3) is an army (Dan. 4 : 35)." — *Prof. James Macgregor, D.D.*

15. **And Jehovah said unto Moses.** "Was there a pause here? At least, *God* heard Moses pray (Jas. 5 : 16)." — *Hand-books for Bible Classes.* **Wherefore criest thou unto me?** This prayer of Moses is not recorded, but we may be sure that Moses, the man of God, was constantly in prayer on this critical occasion. Did God object to the praying of Moses? Certainly not, but this was time for *action.* **Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.** These words might well be taken for the motto of every Christian, and of the entire church of God: Go forward to stronger living, to bolder plans, to a wider fellowship, to nobler achievements! Go forward in missions! Go forward in evangelism! Go into all the world, and make disciples of all nations! Certainly they summarize the splendid career of Moses.

16. **And lift thou up thy rod.** The shepherd staff which, empowered by God, had accomplished such wonders in Egypt. "The mention of the wind, as also of the water, shows that natural means are employed. The *rod* shows by whom." — *Macgregor.* **And stretch out thy hand over the sea.** The Lord made use, probably, of natural means, but the occurrence, at the command of Moses and at just the right time, was clearly supernatural. **And divide it.** To the right and the left. **And the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.** We have many promises just like this with reference to all the floods of doubt and fear and perplexity that confront us. God has told us that if we go forward in faith, we shall walk straight through them on dry land.

17. **And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians.** The same thought has appeared often in the narrative, as in Ex. 9 : 16; 14 : 4. God did not harden their hearts until they had themselves hardened them. There is a terrible point in human wickedness when God recognizes that it is fixed and permanent. **And they shall go in after them.** Wholly regardless of their promise to let them go. **And I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host.** God's glory and power would be made known by the overthrow of the proud Egyptian array, and by snatching God's people from Pharaoh's grasp. In this sense even the wicked contribute to the honor of the Almighty. **Upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.** Some think that the infantry, being at the rear, did not enter the sea and were not destroyed.

18. **And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah.** They had ample reason already to know that Jehovah was the only God, but their pursuit shows how readily they forgot the lesson of the plagues.

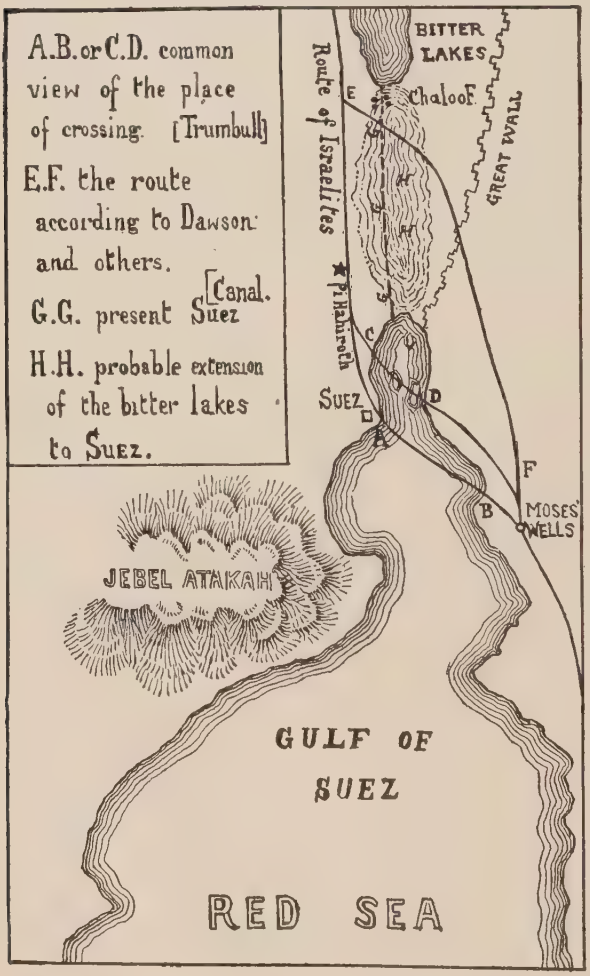
19. **And the angel of God.** God's visible manifestation, appearing in various forms throughout the Old Testament. **Who went before the camp of Israel.** In the mysterious column of dark smoke by day and of bright light by night, to lead their way. **Removed and went behind them.** He had been their guide; now he was to

20. And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night: and the one came not near the other all the night.

21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and Jehovah caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

---

be their defence. **And the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them.** Its place was taken by the verbal command from God to go forward.




20. **And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel.** What a picture this for all time of the protecting power of Jehovah intervening between his children and all harm! **And there was the cloud and the darkness.** Whereas before this the Egyptians could see every movement made in the Israelite camp, now all was hidden from them. It would remind them of the plague of darkness through which they had just passed. **Yet gave it light by night.** The bright side of the cloud was turned toward the Israelites, and furnished a brilliant illumination for their forward march across the Red Sea. **And the one came not near the other all the night.** The Egyptians were afraid to plunge through the impenetrable darkness to attack the Israelites.

21. **And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea.** The wonder-working rod in it. **And Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night.** "At once an east or southeast wind arose, and drove the upper water of the shallow bay that lay before him towards the northwest, while probably a strong ebb-tide set in at the same time and drew the lower water southwards, so that a sort of broad causeway, guarded by water upon either side, was formed." — *Rawlinson*. **And made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.** God had bidden Moses do this, and in a sense Moses did it; but how powerless is the strongest man without God!

22. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

22. **And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.** "The distance to be traversed might not have been more than a mile, and the entire column may easily have accomplished the passage in five or six hours." — *Rawlinson.* **And the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.** "That does not necessarily imply that the waves stood up on each side of them like perpendicular fortifications; and all the requirements of the narrative are met if we suppose that the simple continuance of the water at its ordinary depth kept the chariots of the Egyptians from outflanking them." — *William M. Taylor.*

III. **MOSES, THE STATESMAN,** Ex. 16:1—19:25; 32:1—33:23; Deut. 34:1–8. Perils of the Journey. The peril from the Egyptians was over, for we are told how all of them, as in a rage they rushed after the Israelites, were caught by the returning waters and overwhelmed. But the perils of the wilderness were only beginning. There was the peril of thirst, met by the healing of the waters of Marah and by the springs of Elim. There was the peril of hunger, met by the gracious gift of the manna. There was the peril of the people's murmuring, met by the miracle of the smitten rock. There was the peril of the Amalekites' attack, met by Moses' hands held up in prayer by Aaron and Hur. There was the peril of an overworked Moses, met by Jethro's wise suggestion of subordinate leaders and judges. All these perils were met as they came to them, in the power of God and the wisdom which he gave.

The Giving of the Law. Moses was great as an executive, a leader of men, as we have abundantly seen; but he was uniquely great as a statesman, for he received his laws direct from Jehovah and under circumstance of unparalleled mystery and awful majesty. The physical surroundings were unequalled — the lofty crags of the Sinai region rising in silent grandeur, the thunder and lightning, "the voice of the trumpet," the smoking mountain, "the thick darkness where God was." And the body of laws given to Moses in that wonderful way was worthy of its origin. The core of it was the Decalogue, those ten fundamental commandments of the spiritual and secular life which have ever since formed the basis of the world's highest civilization. Then came the expansion of those ten laws in a body of regulations so comprehensive, so wise, so closely suited to the times and the people that the Jews, whenever they obeyed them, became the healthiest, happiest, strongest, and best of all the nations on earth, the only people from which Christianity could spring. These laws governed the religious life of the Hebrews, their place of worship, their manner of worship, and their religious leadership; they also entered into the familiar details of everyday life, their cleanliness, their food, their conquest of disease. It is a marvellous set of regulations, which the best statesmen of all times have never ceased to admire and to study.

The Golden Calf. The episode of the golden calf serves at least to exalt by contrast the character of Moses, showing the poor material with which he had to deal. His own brother, Aaron, weakly yields to the popular demand. The great body of the people showed how strong a hold Egyptian idolatry had gained upon them. The golden calf meant leaden ingratitude to God for all his goodness. Moses on the Mount and that stupid idol on the plain! For all ages this has been a parable of worldliness over against true religion.

The Founding of a Nation. Moses had to organize an entire civilization, and he had only an undisciplined mass of freedmen to build it on — freedmen so recently out of slavery that they were still weakened by the slave's spirit and vitiated by the sins of their former masters. In ordering the national life Moses founded it upon religion. He made the church central. He recognized at every turn the supreme authority of Jehovah. In no point is this more conspicuous and significant than in the prominence given to the Sabbath. Moses was fortunate in having the wilderness for this work, and it was providential that the Israelites, though out of cowardly distrust they turned back from Canaan, had their apprenticeship in nationality where they were not harassed by foes and could grow unobstructed.

Forty Years of Wandering. "The next thirty-eight years are a mysterious and unrecorded period in the history of Israel, a period of waiting and divine discipline. The mass of the people must have pursued their ordinary pastoral occupa-

tion, perhaps assembling at times before the sanctuary. On the whole, it must have been a time of education, during which some of the lessons of Moses' revelation were assimilated." — *A. R. Whitham.* During this period Moses had to face the discontent of the people, rebellion against his authority, even disaffection within his own family. The deaths of Miriam and Aaron saddened him. The Edomites refused him passage through their country. Much of the time was spent in a struggle for bare subsistence. Yet we are sure that during this long period of trial both the people and their great leader were brought closer to God.

THE FAREWELL ADDRESS. The farewell address of Moses, as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, is one of the most marvellous documents of the Bible and of all time. In it the great lawgiver summarizes his teachings on even the minutest points. "Hastily reading the whole book, it may be described as a book of law and little else; yet reading it more attentively, it will be found that even in Deuteronomy there are evangelical lines full of the very love and tenderness of God." — *Joseph Parker.* The most eloquent passage in the address is the storm of curses pronounced upon those that disobey God, immediately followed by a wonderful rainbow of blessings promised to the obedient. These two lines of thought were Moses' legacy to his people.

THE PISGAH VISION. This great man was not without his faults, the chief of which seems to have been angry petulance. This was exhibited disastrously in the wilderness of Zin, when Moses, to quiet the murmuring people, smote a rock out of which gushed forth water. But in his wrath he vaunted himself and did not honor God, so that he was excluded from the Promised Land to the very edge of which he brought his people. In his last moments, however, he was allowed to ascend Mt. Pisgah and look westward and northwestward — a magnificent view — over the goodly land of Canaan. "Thus, looking in that supreme hour before and after, looking back to all the way by which the Lord had led him, to those three mysterious forties into which his life had been divided, and looking forward to a land of inheritance, fairer, richer, brighter than even that which he now saw but must never tread, the weary, much-enduring man yielded his spirit to his God." — *Hastings.* He was laid in his tomb by Jehovah himself, a vast honor, and that grave has never been found. He next appears in the history, a millennium and a half later, accompanied by Elijah and conversing with the Son of God himself, on another mount, the Mount of Transfiguration.

From an old print.

Holding up the Hands of Moses.

"This Moses, humble in refusing so great a service; resigned in undertaking, faithful in discharging, unwearied in fulfilling it; vigilant in governing his people; resolute in correcting them, ardent in loving them, and patient in bearing with them; the intercessor for them with the God whom they provoked — this Moses, such and so great a man, we love, we admire, and, so far as may be, imitate." — *St. Augustine.*

Moses, the patriot fierce, became
The meekest man on earth,
To show us how love's quickening flame
Can give our souls new birth.

Moses, the man of meekest heart,
Lost Canaan by self-will,
To show, where Grace has done its part,
How sin defiles us still.

Thou, who hast taught me in thy fear,
Yet seest me frail at best,
O grant me loss with Moses here,
To gain his future rest! — *J. H. Newman.*

## LESSON V. — April 29.

## RUTH, THE FAITHFUL DAUGHTER. — The Book of Ruth.

(A Survey of Ruth's Life.)

**PRINT Ruth 1 : 14–22.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.* — Ruth 1 : 16.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 91 : 1–7.
**Primary Topic** : The Story of Ruth.
**Lesson Material** : Ruth 1 : 14–19 ; 2 : 1–13. Print Ruth 1 : 14–19 ; 2 : 2, 3, 8, 10–12.
**Memory Verse** : Honor thy father and thy mother. Ex. 20 : 12.
**Junior Topic** : Ruth and Naomi.
**Lesson Material** : The Book of Ruth. Print Ruth 1 : 14–19 ; 2 : 2, 3, 8, 10–12.
**Memory Verses** : Ruth 1 : 16, 17.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Ruth's Choice and its Outcome.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Secret of Ruth's Noble Life.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will study the entire story of Ruth, with especial emphasis on the privilege of helping parents and the rewards of honest labor. Tell the class that after you have told the story you will call on one of the pupils to tell it, and he will go as far as he can, but if he makes a mistake, some one else will be called upon to take it up ; so all must listen carefully.

**The Older Classes** will review the well-known story rapidly, and will then go on to consider duty to parents, the making of wise life choices, compensations for misfortunes, the dignity of labor, self-restraint and regard for law, and trust in the divine guidance. Do not fail to consider the glimpses given us of a simple, primitive life quite different from our own ; is it to be preferred for any reason?

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Beecher dates Naomi's return from Moab, conjecturally, B.C. 1173, and the marriage of Boaz and Ruth the same year.

**Place.** — Moab, on the east of the Dead Sea. Bethlehem, on the west of the same sea, five miles south of Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The relation of Moab to Israel.
Primitive customs involved in this story.
The characters of Naomi, Orpah, Ruth, and Boaz.
The posterity of Ruth.
The literary beauties of the book of Ruth.
The teachings of the book of Ruth for the present day.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : A Faithful Daughter.**

I. Ruth's Wise Choice, Ruth 1.
- Naomi's misfortunes.
- Orpah goes back.
- Ruth goes forward.

II. Ruth's Faithful Service, Ruth 2.
- Ruth ready to work.
- Boaz the generous.
- Boaz the thoughtful.

III. Ruth's Rich Reward, Ruth 3, 4.
- Boaz the law-abiding.
- Ruth's happy marriage.
- Ruth's glorious posterity.

### THE LESSON IN ART.

Ruth and Naomi Departing from Moab, by Murillo.
Ruth and Boaz, by Jacopo Bassano; by Overbeck.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Chapters on Ruth in Margaret E. Sangster's *Women of the Bible*, Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, Matheson's *Representative Women of the Bible*, Wharton's *Famous Women of the Old Testament*, Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Martyn's *Women of the Bible*, Horton's *Women of the Old Testament*, Moulton in *Women of the Bible*, Aguilar's *Women of Israel*, Taylor's *Ruth and Esther*, Mauro's *Ruth the Satisfied Stranger*, Sunday's *Love Stories of the Bible*, Houghton's *Ruth the Moabitess*, Broughton's *Representative Women of the Bible*, Headley's *Women of the Bible*, Mackay's *Woman of Tact*, Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible*.

I. **RUTH'S WISE CHOICE**, Ruth 1. Naomi's Misfortunes. "We may feel certain that the story of Ruth is based upon historical truth ; the scene and the characters which fill it are unmistakably true to life ; the author drew upon facts of experience, and at the same time, we may well believe, made use of certain famous traditions relating to David." — *Prof. G. A. Cooke, D.D.*

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Ôr′-păh kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15. And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

The story is one of the times of the judges. There was a famine in Judah, which drove Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, to do what all Jews were loath to do, leave their country for a heathen land. They went eastward to Moab, across the Dead Sea, where the two sons married heathen wives, Orpah and Ruth. "Such intermarriage was common throughout Hebrew history, but was strictly forbidden in later times." — *Rev. G. W. Thatcher.*

Photograph by Wilson.

Dead Sea, Looking toward Moab.

Then Naomi's husband and both her sons died, and the poor woman was left alone with her heathen daughters-in-law. It was a sad plight, calling for all her faith in God. The temptation must often have come to her, as it comes to all sorrowing ones, to question the goodness of God and the righteousness of his dealings; but she seems to have resisted the temptation, and to have said with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

ORPAH GOES BACK. But Naomi learned that God had brought the famine in Judah to an end, and her heart told her to return to her home land. Perhaps also she was conscience-stricken for ever leaving it for a land of idols. So she set out homeward, walking, accompanied for some distance, according to the Eastern custom, by her two daughters-in-law. At last she bade them return, and marry again in their own land. This advice, with great reluctance, Orpah accepted.

*Illustration.* "Just as in St. Peter's at Rome there are three domes, the dome of the transept flanked by its lesser domes, so that standing under one of these, the spectator obtains a sense of dignity and size which is increased when he passes under the dome of the transept, and becomes a wonder bordering on ecstasy when at last he stands under the sublime central dome, which appears like the vault of heaven itself, so it might seem as if there were an artistic design to bring out the character of Ruth by first engaging our affection and admiration for the lesser figures. For Orpah is a sweet and attractive creature, clinging with daughterly affection to the mother of her husband, and clinging with an even greater affection to the land of her birth. As she stands at the parting of the ways, hesitating and weeping, as she reluctantly decides to return, as she kisses the woman she has learned to love, and moves slowly back to her accustomed home, our sympathy goes with her, and we find nothing in her conduct which is not perfectly tender and womanly." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

RUTH GOES FORWARD. 14. **And they lifted up their voice, and wept again.** They were wailing shrilly, as Orientals do, their eyes streaming tears. **And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law.** The Greek version adds, "and returned to her people." **But Ruth clave unto her.** "The difference between mere kindness of manner and self-sacrificing love is most vividly depicted in the above words." — *Speaker's Commentary.*

15. **And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people.** "Naomi, now armed with a fresh argument, urges Ruth to follow her sister-in-law's example." — *Ellicott.* **And unto her god.** Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, a deity worshipped with horrible human sacrifices. **Return thou after thy sister-in-law.** Naomi is

16. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;
17. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

splendid in her unselfishness. "She declares that she does not mind going forward alone, that nothing can hurt her now since the worst that can happen has happened already, and that she will be far more contented in her future solitude if she thinks of Ruth as provided for than if, on the contrary, she feels responsible for grief and poverty that Ruth may meet if she tarries with her." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

Philip H. Calderon.
Ruth and Naomi.

16. **And Ruth said.** This sentence by Ruth (vs. 16, 17) is one of the most famous and beautiful in the Bible. "So strong was her determination, and so fervent the love out of which it sprung, that it expressed itself in words which no poetry has out-rivalled and no pathos has exceeded, and which have come down through the centuries with a music that will not let them be forgotten." — *William M. Taylor.* **Entreat me not to leave thee.** Rev. W. Mackintosh Mackay brings out the unconscious poetry of Ruth's words by printing them in verse form :

"Entreat me not to leave thee,
To return from following after thee:
Whither thou goest, I will go;
Where thou lodgest, I will lodge:
Thy people shall be my people,
Thy God shall be my God;
Where thou diest, will I die,
There also will I be buried:
Jehovah do so to me, and more also,
If aught but death part thee and me."

**And to return from following after thee.** "It is easier far to rush on the spears of the foe, amid the whirl and excitement of battle, than to choose with open eyes so dreary a lifelong path." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **For whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge.** "The reference is not to the ultimate destination, but to the nightly halts." — *Pulpit Commentary.* **Thy people shall be my people.** "Decision is all-important. Any other course would have forever shut out the fair Moabitess from the happy life which awaited her in Bethlehem. Decision at the outset of Christian life saves us from a thousand doubts, difficulties, and snares which trouble the half-hearted and hesitating. Our footsteps must be so resolutely set towards Bethlehem that we shall have no thought even of looking back towards Moab." — *Rev. Ross C. Houghton, D.D.* **And thy God my God.** "This was probably the hardest thing of all for Ruth to say. . . . It means much for the human heart to part with all its goods, all in which it puts its trust, and to say to the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Thy God shall be my God.'" — *Philip Mauro.* Every true Christian must follow Ruth in this decision.

17. **Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried.** "According to ancient thought union in life meant union in death and in the grave; the members of a family had a common burying-place. In the underworld they lived together, as families and by nations." — *Cambridge Bible.* **Jehovah do so to me, and more also.** "Jehovah has already become the God of Ruth, and she uses the name of Israel's

18. And when she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.

19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and *the women* said, Is this Nā-ō′-mī?

20. And she said unto them, Call me not Nā-ō′-mī, call me Mā′-rȧ; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21. I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty; why call ye me Nā-ō′-mī, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22. So Nā-ō′-mī returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-

---

God in a solemn imprecation which occurs only here and in the books of Samuel and Kings." — *Prof. G. A. Cooke, D.D.* " ' So ' stands in misty indefiniteness, as a kind of cloudy veil, two-thirds concealing and one-third revealing whatever horrid infliction could by dramatic sign be represented or hinted." — *Pulpit Commentary.* **If aught but death part thee and me.** That is, if I *allow* anything but death to separate us.

18. **And when she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her.** " Naomi knew that the girl's decision could not be changed. Some girls are built that way ! " — " *Billy* " *Sunday.* **She left off speaking unto her.** She ceased urging her on that subject.

19. **So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.** " Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law have ceased to be, and it is a pair of world-famous friends who descend arm in arm on the road to Bethlehem." — *Prof. Richard G. Moulton.* **And . . . all the city was moved about them.** Bethlehem was not a large place, and news travels rapidly in an Oriental town. **And the women said, Is this Naomi ?** Can this sad and lonely widow be the bright-faced woman who left us with her husband and her two sons ? The women would naturally take the deepest interest in the fate of a woman whom they had known so well.

From a photograph by Bonfils.

Gleaners in a Field of Grain, near Bethlehem.

20. **And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.** Naomi means " pleasant, sweet," and Mara means " bitter." Compare Gen. 27 : 36; Jer. 20 : 3, etc. **For the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.** Thus also Job complained of Jehovah, Job 27 : 2. He is Almighty, said Naomi, implying that he had the power to give her all blessings, and yet he had given her all misery. How little she understood the goodness of the loving Father !

21. **I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty.** " The very reverse of Jacob's experience as given in Gen. 32 : 10 : ' With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.' " — *Speaker's Commentary.* **Why call ye me Naomi, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me.** Jehovah was opposed to Naomi, she thought, as a witness testifying against her in court ; he was her enemy. But he was soon to show himself her friend, testifying for her. **And the Almighty hath afflicted me ?** We are very quick to charge God with our few misfortunes ; not so quick or so earnest in ascribing to him our many blessings.

22. **So Naomi returned.** This is the summing up of the first division of the story.

law, with her, who returned out of the country of Mō′-ăb: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

**And Ruth the Moabitess**. That Ruth was a foreigner is constantly insisted upon in this little book, one of whose purposes is evidently to emphasize the fact that God blesses foreigners as well as Jews, when they serve him. This thought knits the book to the book of Jonah. **And they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest**. "God had restored plenty to his people, and the wayfarers thus arrive to witness and receive their share of the blessing. The barley harvest was the earliest (Ex. 9 : 31, 32), and would ordinarily fall about the end of April." — *Ellicott.* This note of time is to prepare the way for what follows.

Ruth the Gleaner.

II. **RUTH'S FAITHFUL SERVICE**, Ruth 2. Ruth Ready to Work. Ruth at once showed that she did not intend to be dependent upon her mother-in-law, but to be the support of the two. With strong self-reliance she proposed that she should go out into the barley fields and gather up the grain left behind by the reapers. This privilege was granted to the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger, by custom in those early days, by law later. A kindly farmer would allow it, an ugly one would forbid it. Ruth went forth, trusting that she might light on the field of some gracious owner. "It doesn't hurt a girl to work. It doesn't even mar her chances for Boazes. A man who is worth having will love the more when he sees his love engaged in honest toil." — *Rev. Len. G. Broughton.*

Boaz the Generous. Providence led the young woman in the best direction possible, to the field of Boaz (the name may mean "in him is strength"), who was a kinsman of her dead father-in-law, Naomi's husband, Elimelech. This Boaz was a wealthy and prominent man, a deeply religious man. When he came to the field he greeted his reapers with the words, "The Lord be with you," and they answered heartily, "The Lord bless thee." He noticed the beautiful young woman gleaning after his reapers, and asked who she was. On learning, he looked favorably upon her at once, for he had heard of her faithfulness and loyalty toward the aged Naomi, qualities that such a man as Boaz would highly approve. He at once bade Ruth glean in no other field but his, and drink what was provided for his reapers. Moreover, he commanded the young men not to annoy her, and to pull grain out of the sheaves, leaving it behind for her to glean the more. "The Lord recompense thy work," said Boaz nobly to Ruth, "and a full reward be given thee of the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take refuge." So Boaz ascribed his generosity to its true source in Jehovah, and led the stranger from a heathen land into closer fellowship with the true God. This was a richer gift by far than that of the grain.

Winnowing Fan.

Boaz the Thoughtful. The fruit of Ruth's gleaning for that one day was, after the grain had been beaten from the chaff by the flail, no less than an ephah,

that is, about a bushel, under the weight of which Ruth went staggering happily home. She told Naomi of her pleasant experience, and closed with the name of her benefactor. " Why ! " exclaimed Naomi, " he is one of our near kinsmen ! " And she burst into praise of the Lord. So Ruth continued to glean in the fields of Boaz all through barley harvest and through the wheat harvest that followed two or three weeks later.

Doubtless Naomi saw that Boaz was becoming attached to Ruth, and in her mother's heart longed to bring them together ; but Boaz was much older than Ruth, who might be expected to choose a younger husband. There was nothing for it but for Ruth virtually to offer herself to Boaz, which was done in the symbolic manner described with beautiful restraint in the story. Ruth, a stranger to the customs and religion of the land, placed herself unreservedly in Naomi's hands. The elder woman had her daughter-in-law appeal to a Hebrew custom quite unlike any of ours, which called upon the next of kin to a dead man to purchase his land, and to marry his widow, though the latter was not compulsory. Evidently Boaz had been thinking of this obligation but had been deterred by his age and by the fact that there was a nearer kinsman than he. When, however, Ruth came to him at the threshingfloor, the disparity of years was shown to be no obstacle in her eyes, and he proceeded with energy to get the nearer kinsman out of the way. But it was all done with a fine thoughtfulness for Ruth's reputation that makes clear the high character of Boaz. He was thoughtful also of Naomi, and sent her by Ruth a present of barley as earnest of his purpose to care for her and hers.

A Threshing Floor. From a photograph.

III. **RUTH'S RICH REWARD**, Ruth 3, 4. BOAZ THE LAW-ABIDING. " The open space at the gate of the city was the place where legal decisions were given by the elders and the greater part of the business of the town was transacted. That gate had already seen a large part of the story. It had seen Elimelech, rich in flocks and herds, setting out for the land of Moab. It had seen Naomi returning poor, friendless, and desolate. It had seen Ruth going forth every morning to the harvest-field ; it had seen her returning with her gleanings in the evening. It was but fitting that the gate should see how it was all to end." — *Hastings.*

Early the next day Boaz convened at the gate a council of ten elders, and called in the next of kin, stating the case. This next of kin was promptly willing to redeem the land of the dead Elimelech, buying it from Naomi and Ruth in order to keep it in the family ; but when Boaz insisted that he must marry Ruth also, he demurred, apparently on the ground that this union with a Moabitess would invalidate some inheritance. Then he took off his shoe and handed it to Boaz, thus transferring to the latter all his rights in the matter ; for as " one enters upon the occupancy of a field by treading upon it with his shoes, the pulling off of the shoe indicates the intention of *not* carrying out this occupancy." — *E. König.*

The solemn transaction being completed, the elders and all the people broke out into joyful congratulations which showed not only their friendship for Boaz, but the honor in which Ruth was held, for they prayed for her the blessings which had fallen upon the most famous women of the Hebrew race, even Rachel and Leah, the wives of Jacob. Dante, in the *Paradise,* takes up this pæan, and ranks Ruth next to Sarah, Rebecca, and Judith.

The entire proceeding, in its orderliness, its dignity, and its splendid regard for law, needs to be studied often in our own more heedless days, that the spirit of it may sink into our lives.

RUTH'S HAPPY MARRIAGE. We may be sure that the wedding of Boaz and Ruth

was celebrated as happily as possible, with the rejoicings and congratulations of all Bethlehem. We are given only one glimpse of their married life, but that is the glimpse that meant the most to a Hebrew woman, the birth of a son to continue the family. This event was marked by the special thanksgiving of the women of Bethlehem, and Naomi was the particular object of their congratulations, nor did they omit to praise Ruth the happy mother, who had been to Naomi, as they truly said, "better than seven sons." "Obed" was the name given to the son, meaning "a servant." We are led to think of the One who was to join his posterity, regarding whom the prophets declared that he should be prëeminently the Servant of the Most High.

Ruth's Glorious Posterity. "As the wife of Boaz and mother of Obed, Ruth was the great-grandmother of the shepherd king and sweet psalmist of Israel, and through him an ancestor of the promised Messiah, an honor for which any pious Hebrew woman would gladly have exchanged life itself." — *Mrs. S. F. Martyn.* Ruth's poetic words in which she expressed her life-choice may well be regarded as an anticipation of David's beautiful songs, while it is most fitting that a woman of an alien race should be among the earthly ancestors of Jesus Christ, in whom all the nations of earth are brought around the foot of the Throne.

"It is not to be wondered at that the church of Christ, with such a dash of romance and mysticism in her heart, should have seen in Ruth's husband, Boaz, a far-off figure of her own husband, Jesus Christ. For she, like Naomi and Ruth, was disinherited, disconsolate, despised, forgotten, and without kinsman-redeemer in her famine and all her deep distress, when his eye and his heart fell on her in the field. And how well he has performed a kinsman's part all the world has read in a Book that for truth and beauty far outstrips the Book of Ruth. How he has not only redeemed her, but has given her rest in his own house, in his Father's house, and in his own heart — what written book can ever fully tell? Boaz the Bethlehemite and Ruth the Moabitess made a noble marriage, and a noble race sprang out of that marriage. Obed, and Jesse, and David, and Solomon, and Joseph, and Mary, and Jesus Christ — my Kinsman-Redeemer, and yours." — *Alexander Whyte.*

## LESSON VI. — May 6.

## SAMUEL: JUDGE AND PROPHET. — 1 Samuel 1 : 1—4 : 1; 7 : 3—10 : 27; 11 : 12—13 : 15; 15 : 1—16 : 13; 25 : 1; 28 : 3–20.

(A Survey of Samuel's Life.)

**PRINT 1 Sam. 12 : 1–5, 20–25.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.* — 1 Sam. 12 : 24.

**Devotional Reading**: Ps. 33 : 1–9.
**Reference Material**: 1 Chron. 9 : 22; 29 : 29; Ps. 99 : 6; Jer. 15 : 1; Heb. 11 : 32, 33.
**Primary Topic**: Samuel, the Boy Who Served in God's House.
**Lesson Material**: 1 Sam. 2 : 18, 19; 3 : 1–10.
**Memory Verse**: Speak, Jehovah; for thy servant heareth. 1 Sam. 3 : 9.
**Junior Topic**: A Boy Who Heard God's Call.
**Lesson Material**: 1 Sam. 2 : 18, 19; 3 : 1–21. Print 1 Sam. 2 : 18, 19; 3 : 1–10, 19, 20.
**Memory Verse**: 1 Sam. 3 : 10.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: Samuel, the Upright Judge.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: Samuel, a True Patriot.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary and Junior Classes** will center their attention on the boyhood of Samuel, as this is one of the most attractive pictures of childhood in the Bible. Ask each member of the class to tell one thing that Samuel would be sure to do for Christ and the church if he were a boy to-day. Make a list of these. Sketch rapidly the great career of Samuel for which his godly boyhood prepared him, and illustrate with some of the noble leaders of to-day whose boyhoods also were noble.

**The Older Classes** will survey Samuel's entire life, making it a study of the highest patriotism, and drawing from it lessons for modern citizens. Ask the pupils to name the qualities in Samuel which are needed by the men and women of to-day for their civic life. How would Samuel change things if he were living to-day in your town ? your State ? our nation ?

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Beecher conjectures that Samuel was born B.C. 1171 and died B.C. 1065. He dates Saul's reign from B.C. 1102.

Ruins at Ramah, the Home of Samuel.

**Place.** — The tabernacle at Shiloh, north of Beth-el. Samuel's home at Ramah, north of Jerusalem. The assembly at Gilgal, northeast of Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Hannah as a type of fine motherhood.
Samuel's characteristics.
Samuel and other boys of the Bible.
Samuel compared with Aristides.
The schools of the prophets.
Samuel the judge and statesman.
Samuel the prophet.
Samuel the teacher.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT : Samuel : a True Patriot.

I. SAMUEL, THE GODLY CHILD, 1 Sam. 1 : 1—4 : 1.

A mother's prayers.
A mother's song.
Eli's evil sons.
Eli's faithful assistant.

II. SAMUEL, THE UNSELFISH LEADER, 1 Sam. 7 : 3—10 : 27 ; 11 : 12—12 : 25.

The miracle at Mizpah.
The Eben-ezer stone.
The ungodly sons.
The choice of Saul.
Samuel's review of his life.

III. SAMUEL, THE JUDGE AND PROPHET, 1 Sam. 13 : 1–15; 15 : 1—16 : 13 ; 25 : 1 ; 28 : 3–20.

Samuel condemns Saul.
Saul's second disobedience.
The choice of David.
The death of Samuel.
The spirit of Samuel.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The Presentation of Samuel to Eli, by Opie, Copley, Burne-Jones. The Call of Samuel, the famous picture by Reynolds (National Gallery, London). Saul Reproved by Samuel, by Copley.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

On Hannah, Bishop Hurst in *Women of the Bible*, Margaret E. Sangster's *The Women of the Bible*, Matheson's *Representative Women of the Bible*, Mrs. Martyn's *Women of the Bible*. On Samuel, Simpson in *Men of the Old Testament*, Greenhough's *Half-Hours in God's Older Picture Gallery*. Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Deane's *Samuel and Saul*, Sime's *Samuel and the Schools of the Prophets*, Hastings's *The Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, Campbell's *The Song of Ages*, Elmslie's *Lectures and Sermons*, Maclaren's *Expositions*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*, Meyer's *Samuel the Prophet*, Morgan's *The Call of God*, Salmond's *Eli, Samuel, and Saul*, Whiton's *What of Samuel ?* Williams's *Characters of the Old Testament*, Robinson's *Leaders of Israel*, Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*.

I. **SAMUEL, THE GODLY CHILD**, 1 Sam. 1 : 1—4 : 1. A MOTHER'S PRAYERS. The mother of Samuel was a godly woman named Hannah (" graciousness "), the same as Anna, Anne, and Ann. She was the beloved wife of a Levite named Elkanah, but she was childless — the greatest grief that could befall a Hebrew woman. Moreover Elkanah married a second wife who bore him children, and often taunted Hannah with that fact. So cruel was she that poor Hannah, when the family were visiting the tabernacle at Shiloh, stole away to the sacred enclosure and prayed earnestly that God would give her a baby boy. The aged high-priest and judge, Eli, mistook the silent moving of her lips for a token of maudlin drunkenness — a hint of the degradation of the times — and rebuked her for it ; but she replied in a spirited though respectful way, and Eli made amends by giving her his blessing and the assurance that her prayer would be answered. At once Hannah's faith reached out to anticipate the coming answer to her prayer, and her soul was filled with a great peace

and joy which in due time were crowned with the advent of the baby Samuel, a name which was regarded as commemorating the manner of his birth, for it signifies "name of God," very similar in the Hebrew to a word meaning "asked of God."

"The laurel wreath that encircles the name of Hannah belongs to her because she prevailed in prayer." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

A Mother's Song. The beautiful thanksgiving psalm of Hannah, celebrating the birth of the wonderful boy, "has been the admiration of succeeding generations, and forms one of the golden links which connect the song of Sarah on the birth of Isaac with the Magnificat of the Blessed Virgin." "From the narrow basis of her own deliverance as an individual instance of the mercy and might of Jehovah she rises to a broad vision of the universal providence and guardianship of the Lord in behalf of all those who put their trust in him." — *Bishop John F. Hurst.* Mary's psalm has numerous points of close resemblance to Hannah's.

"For weal or for woe a mother's influence is infinitely great. We are not surprised to learn that Byron's mother was proud, ill-tempered, and violent; or that Nero's was a murderess. On the other hand, we need not be astonished that Sir Walter Scott's was a lover of poetry; or those of Wesley, Augustine, Chrysostom, Basil, and others, remarkable for their intelligence and goodness. Like mother, like child. That is what led the good Lord Shaftesbury to exclaim, 'Give me a generation of Christian mothers, and I will undertake to change the face of society in twelve months.'" — *E. Morgan.*

"Hannah's song is purely unselfish. She thinks of herself as the type of many, and it is for the many she thanks God." — *George Matheson.*

Eli's Evil Sons. Samuel was by birth a Levite, but at this time many Levites seem to have had no official duties, Elkanah himself probably of the number; and in any event a Levite's service in the tabernacle extended only from the age of twenty-five to that of thirty to fifty. Hannah, however, had vowed that the child of prayer should be devoted to the lifelong service of God as a Nazirite, as was Samson before him and John the Baptist after him. A Nazirite abstained from all intoxicating liquor, allowed his hair and beard to grow freely, and avoided defilement by a dead body, these being tokens of strength and purity of life.

Samuel. Sir Joshua Reynolds.

In strong contrast with the life thus marked out for Samuel were the lives of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas. These young men were grafters, greedily seizing more than the priest's share of the sacrifices brought to the sacred altar; their lives also were horribly impure, and they were a disgrace to their sacred calling. Eli, either through a father's blind partiality or because the infirmities of age kept him ignorant of what was going on, seems not to have rebuked these terrible sins, and not to have realized how unworthy his sons were to succeed him.

Eli's Faithful Assistant. As soon as Samuel was old enough to be parted from his mother, Hannah completed her vow by taking him to Eli and asking the high priest to accept the lad as his helper in the Tabernacle. Samuel was then only two or three years old, but he proved willing and faithful from the very beginning. "The objection has been made that so young a child would have been troublesome to Eli, but there were women engaged in the Tabernacle service, to whose care he might have been committed. It was important that he should be dedicated as soon as possible. The house of God was to be the only home he knew; the earliest impressions of his boyhood were to be those of the sanctuary." — *Cambridge Bible.* We make a sad mistake when we do not very early accustom our children to the church.

"Those who lend to the Lord shall be repaid by Him with usury. This truth was strikingly exemplified in the case of the mother of Samuel. She gave an only child

to God, and he rewarded her for the sacrifice by giving her other sons and daughters, to bear up her name in Israel, and to be the support of her old age." — *Mrs. S. T. Martyn.*

"The priests furnished Samuel with a sacred garment, an ephod, made, like their own, of white linen, though of inferior quality; and his mother gave him every year a little mantle reaching down to his feet, such as was worn only by high personages, or women, over the other dress, and this he retained as his badge till the latest times of his life. He seems to have slept within the holiest place, and his special duty was to put out the sacred candlestick, and to open the doors at sunrise. In this way his childhood was passed." — *Hastings.*

The most striking event in Samuel's boyhood took place, according to Josephus, when he was twelve years old, the age when the child Jesus went up to Jerusalem, the age when a Jewish boy became personally responsible for obedience to the Law of God. The mysterious, thrice-repeated call of the divine voice, followed by the announcement of the coming doom of Eli's sons, involving the death of Eli himself and the peril of the entire nation, showed Eli that he had a young prophet with him in the Tabernacle.

Why was this message sent through Samuel? Because the lad could honestly use the famous word, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." "As Samuel was prepared, so Samuel heard the voice; and as you and I live as it were in the presence of God, does God come to speak to us." — *Rev. R. J. Campbell.*

Nor was this the only instance of the kind. We read that on other occasions "the Lord was with him" as he grew, and that his prophetic gifts became known to all the nation. A similar record was made by the youthful Jesus (Luke 2 : 52), and like words may and should be used regarding every boy and girl.

"Whenever in the Old Testament you find the childhood of any character that figures in the drama elaborately described, you may take it for certain that the historians consider the man so depicted to be the maker of a new epoch." — *Professor Elmslie.* That is certainly true of Samuel.

And let us remember the great share of Eli in the lad's development. "When you think of Samuel do not forget the gentle, tired old man who was his schoolmaster." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

II. **SAMUEL, THE UNSELFISH LEADER**, 1 Sam. 7 : 3—10 : 27; 11 : 12—12 : 25. The Miracle at Mizpah. Samuel's prophecy regarding Eli and his sons was soon fulfilled. The Israelites were attacked by their old-time enemies, the Philistines, the powerful tribe between Judah and the Mediterranean. They were terribly defeated at Aphek, the ark of the covenant was captured, Hophni and Phinehas were slain, and the aged Eli died on receipt of the sad news.

Mizpah.

This great disaster, and the subjection of the people to the Philistines, was God's opportunity and Samuel's. A solemn assembly of the nation was held at Mizpah in Benjamin, a little north of Jerusalem. There Samuel rebuked the people for their idolatries, led them to repentance, and spent some time in reorganizing the nation. He was, indeed, following Moses, the second founder of the Jewish state.

Alarmed by this assembly, and anticipating a revolt as the result of it, the Philistines promptly attacked the Israelites at Mizpah as Samuel was offering a lamb for the people's sins. Then God's voice spoke in mighty thunder, the Israelites were

1. And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

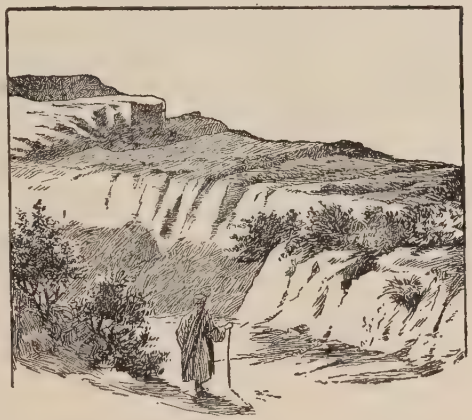
encouraged, and the Philistines, panic-stricken, were defeated so severely that they did not trouble the Israelites for a long time.

The Eben-ezer Stone. To commemorate this signal deliverance Samuel set up a stone at the place of battle, between Mizpah and Shen, and called the memorial Eben-ezer, "the Stone of Help." "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," was Samuel's interpretation of the name; that is, the providences of God in the past were proof that God would continue to care for his people in the years to come.

"Here I raise my Eben-ezer,
Hither by thine help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home." — *Robert Robinson.*

"Samuel's task was not indeed so great, but in a real sense almost more difficult, than that of Moses. For while Moses had created the nation and its faith, Samuel had to re-create them. He had to restore and rebuild out of ruins." — *Rev. P. Carnegie Simpson.*

The Ungodly Sons. During the period of peace which followed Samuel was the accepted head of the nation. He had a regular circuit of four cities — Beth-el, Gilgal, Mizpah, and his own home, Ramah — which he visited in turn, holding court in each, and deciding all cases brought before him. As he grew old, it became necessary for him to have assistance, and so he made judges of his two sons, Joel and Abiah; but, strange to say, these young men went wrong just as Eli's two sons had gone wrong. Samuel does not seem to have profited by the sad example which had come so close to him, and had failed in the education of his boys; but the fault may have been theirs and not at all their father's. Some children are so self-willed and foolish that all the warnings and loving counsel of the wisest parents is wasted upon them. At any rate, the graft and bribe-taking of the two young judges became notorious, and it was evident that they could not succeed to their father's place and power.



Gilgal.

The Choice of Saul. This condition of affairs gave the Israelites an opportunity to urge what doubtless they had wanted for a long time, the appointment of a king. They desired the pomp and show of monarchy. They were restive under the severe simplicity of their government, with its exaltation of an unseen, heavenly ruler and its constant demand for purity, restraint, courage, and faith.

Samuel at first received their request as a personal affront, as an ungrateful repudiation of his own services, which had done so much for the nation; but God showed him that it was really their divine Ruler that was repudiated. Nevertheless, Samuel was instructed to let the people have their way and learn from bitter experience what it means to look to man rather than God. Samuel warned the people faithfully, but they persisted in their demand, and with a heavy heart the aged judge anointed as king the tall and gallant youth whom the Lord pointed out to him, Saul the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Samuel's Review of His Life. "We believe we possess in this section of our history many of the very words spoken on this momentous occasion by the old man. The words of the accredited minister of the invisible King when the Eternal made over the sovereignty to Saul would surely be treasured up with a jealous care." — *Ellicott.*

1. **And Samuel said unto all Israel.** It was a largely attended assembly, containing leaders from all the tribes, fully representing all the nation. It formally closed

2. And now, behold, the king walketh before you; and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day.

3. Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

the period of the judges, and opened the period of the monarchy. It was held at Gilgal, confirming a previous assembly held for the same purpose at Mizpah. **Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me.** This refers to the people's demand of a king, and Samuel's consent according to God's instructions. **And have made a king over you.** Samuel had faithfully warned them that the hand of the king would be heavy upon them, and that they would regret their action (1 Sam. 8 : 10–18).

Samuel Anointing Saul.

2. **And now, behold, the king walketh before you.** "The king is thought of as a shepherd walking before his flock." — *International Critical Commentary.* Eastern sheep follow their shepherds and are not driven before them; see John 10 : 3, 4. **And I am old and grayheaded.** There is here a pathetic contrast: Samuel, who had once walked before the people as firmly as the vigorous Saul, was now too feeble to be a leader. **And, behold, my sons are with you.** Now that Samuel's sons are growing up, the aged statesman recognizes that he belongs to a past generation. **And I have walked before you from my youth unto this day.** He walked before them as a leader, the entire nation following him.

3. **Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah.** That is, speak the truth regarding me as you would if standing in the presence of the all-knowing God. **And before his anointed.** "The anointed is Saul the newly made king; he stands parallel to Jehovah because he is Jehovah's representative." — *Prof. Loring W. Batten.* **Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken?** The questions indicate what was a common form of graft in Eastern courts. **Or whom have I defrauded?** Samuel turns to more general questions. "These questions all refer to judicial honesty, which has always been rare in the East." — *International Critical Commentary.* **Whom have I oppressed?** This is the most serious charge that could be brought against a judge, implying active attempts to injure others. **Or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith?** "Ransom" is "the technical term for blood-money paid to the relatives of a murdered man, which was strictly forbidden by Hebrew law (Num. 35 : 31 f.). Here, as in Amos 5 : 12, it denotes the bribe (so in R. V. margin) offered to a judge to induce him to acquit the murderer." — *Prof. A. R. S. Kennedy.* **And I will restore it you.** Hebrew law often accepted restitution as sufficient punishment for a crime of this nature; our laws would add imprisonment and degradation from office.

4. **And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us,** etc. "I think I have heard of politicians in some other countries further west than Gilgal, who have axes to grind

5. And he said unto them, Jehovah is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they said, He is witness.

20. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart:

21. And turn ye not aside; for *then would ye go* after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.

22. For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself.

---

and logs to roll, and of the wonderful effects, in many places of business, of certain circular gold discs applied to the eyes. This man went away a poor man. He does not seem to have had salary, or retiring pension ; but he carried away a pair of clean hands, as the voice of a nation witnessed." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

5. **And he said unto them, Jehovah is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day.** That is, God had heard their testimony, and would be against them if at any later time they should bring charges against Samuel. **That ye have not found aught in my hand.** That is, anything that should not be there, any bribe or anything taken by compulsion. **And they said, He is witness.** That is, God is witness, the king not being included in the reply.

*Illustration.* " In ancient Rome they used to put on a white robe when they went out to ask for the votes of the voters, and it was for this that they were called ' candidates ' in the language of Rome : spotless men, that is, in our language. But it was only one famous name here and another there that came out of office as clean as they entered it. Look at Samuel laying down his office and putting on his snow-white mantle." — *Alexander Whyte.*

Samuel was moved in his spirit by the Lord to offer the people a miracle in proof that God was with him and that the warnings he had been giving were God's warnings. It was then the time of wheat harvest, " between May 15 and June 15. Jerome's testimony (that of an eye-witness), ' I have never seen rain in the end of June or in July in Judæa,' is borne out by modern travellers." — *Speaker's Commentary.* Nevertheless Samuel announced to the people that the Lord would send thunder and rain that day, which God did, to the people's great wonder and fear.

20. **And Samuel said unto the people.** They had begged him to intercede for them with the Almighty, lest he slay them for their sins. **Fear not.** There spoke the father of his people, comforting them even when they did not deserve to be comforted. The words are like those of Moses when the people were terrified at the thunders of Sinai, Ex. 20 : 20. **Ye have indeed done all this evil.** The true leader and teacher will never condone wickedness, however he may long to comfort and cheer the wrongdoer. It would be no kindness to do that. **Yet turn not aside from following Jehovah.** They have sinned, and have turned aside from God's ways ; but now they have returned to those ways, and Samuel exhorts them never to wander again. **But serve Jehovah with all your heart.** How many times, in later history, the people tried to serve God with half their hearts and idols with the other half, always ending with serving idols with all their hearts ! This is the inevitable result of halfway service — it becomes no service at all.

21. **And turn ye not aside ; for then would ye go after vain things.** The " vain (empty) things " are idols ; turning *from* God would be turning *to* idolatry. Professor H. P. Smith translates this entire sentence : " And do not turn aside after the nothings." **Which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.** This strong phrase is true of all pursuits apart from God, all desires that are contrary to his will, all gain that he does not give : they are not profitable in time of peace or a protection in time of trouble ; they are nothingness.

22. **For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake.** God's own name would be involved in the downfall of the people that had borne God's name and had been called God's people. **Because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself.** The Jews were the chosen nation not because of their own goodness, but because of God's grace. God was pleased to select them for his own, unworthy as they were. Does he not thus call us to himself ?

23. Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.

24. Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

23. **Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you.** "Samuel was a proverb of prayer." — *Alexander Whyte.* He had just shown the power of his prayers by obtaining from God the wonderful sign of the thunder storm in the dry season (1 Sam. 12 : 16–18). It was then, when terror-stricken by this portent, that the people had asked Samuel to beg God to forgive them for their faithlessness in asking for a king. This verse sets forth powerfully the obligation of intercessory prayer which rests on all God's children. **But I will instruct you in the good and the right way.** Samuel was old, and was no longer to be the civil ruler of the people, but he would be their spiritual leader as long as he could speak and pray.

24. **Only fear Jehovah.** This is the religious side of "the good and the right way." **And serve him in truth with all your heart.** This is the ethical, the practical side of "the good and the right way." **For consider how great things he hath done for you.** "The reference is to the miracle just witnessed." — *International Critical Commentary.* On the other hand, Professor Kirkpatrick says: "The reference can scarcely be limited to the recent storm as a display of God's greatness, but includes all his gracious dealings with his people."

25. **But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed.** The verb means "to be destroyed," and is used elsewhere of being killed in battle. **Both ye and your king.** It is probable that Samuel had prophetic vision of Saul's death in the battle of Gilboa.

III. **SAMUEL, THE JUDGE AND PROPHET,** 1 Sam. 13 : 1–15; 15 : 1—16 : 13; 25 : 1; 28 : 3–20. Samuel Condemns Saul. Samuel evidently admired and loved Saul, and hoped against hope that he would make a worthy ruler of the Israelites. Saul proved to be a valiant fighter. He drove off the invading Philistines, though the credit for that victory belonged to his noble son Jonathan, one of the finest characters in the Bible. His wars were waged successfully against the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Amalekites, and other enemies in a circle around his domains. But Saul's impetuosity and self-will were his undoing. He refused to await Samuel's coming, that proper sacrifices might precede the fighting with the Philistines, and impiously offered the sacrifice himself. Again, when bidden by the Lord through Samuel to destroy the Amalekites utterly, with all their possessions, he spared their king Agag to grace his triumph, and also saved the best of all his sheep and oxen. For these sins, though sorely grieving, Samuel was obliged to condemn Saul, and to tell him that the kingdom would not remain in his house.

The Choice of David. Samuel's choice of David to succeed Saul was made under the same divine guidance that led him in the selection of Saul. It was even more marked, for as the tall, older sons of Jesse passed before him, the prophet thought with each that surely the new king stood before him. Not until the fair-haired youngest boy was brought in from the field, however, was the divine intimation given and the anointing oil poured forth. This was the greatest work of Samuel's life, for David was not only the noblest king of Israel, but he was the human ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ. The event was enriched by one of the wisest sayings of Holy Writ: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

The Death of Samuel. After the choice of David, Samuel passes out of the history. The old man must have watched with keen anxiety the cruel conduct of Saul toward David, and he must have noted with approval and thanksgiving the many evidences that David gave of fitness for the throne. But the aged prophet was not to see David become king. He passed away near the close of Saul's tumultuous career, having lived for perhaps one hundred and six years, and having been for fully eighty years the brains and soul of his nation. He was buried at his home in Ramah amid the lamentations of all the people.

" There may have been in the history of Israel men of more supreme and brilliant genius than Samuel was ; but there was not any one whose life and character were nobler and whose name is more justly to be venerated. When the old man died, it was no more than due that, as we read, the people mourned for him as they mourned for Moses himself." — *Rev. P. Carnegie Simpson.*

THE SPIRIT OF SAMUEL. We hear of Samuel again after his death, since Saul, just before the battle after which he committed suicide, bade the witch of En-dor call up the spirit of Samuel that he might give him counsel. But the spirit of the prophet had no word of comfort for the impious and disobedient king. Once more he told him that the kingdom should be taken from him and his house, and given to David. " It was a fearful doom. Heard in the darkness of that mysterious chamber, spoken by a visitant from another world, it powerfully affected the miserable king." — *Rev. William J. Deane.* Alas that the last recorded words of Samuel were compelled to be stern and terrible, when he would so gladly have made them hopeful and inspiring !

" Samuel's sphere was not that of a warrior, but rather that of a spokesman for God. The moral greatness of Samuel is seen in all his deeds, but especially in his noble unselfishness and humility, in his devotion to the highest interests of his people, and in his loyalty to Jehovah." — *Prof. George L. Robinson.*

" He found his people in the deepest national degradation, politically and religiously, and left them on the eve of the most splendid era in their history." — *Cunningham Geikie.*

Samuel was not only prophet and judge, but he was a great teacher. He established and conducted schools of theology. " The students under his care were called Sons of the Prophets, a name which indicates a new sphere of labor, a new institution in the country, a new effort to awaken interest in spiritual things among the Hebrews." — *Rev. James Sime.*

The story of Samuel, the child of rich promise and many prayers, is a constant inspiration to all workers with children. " God is training our children to-day. In our religious homes and Sunday schools his far-seeing eyes have already marked out his Samuels, his prophets of the future, his champions in the righteous battles which are still to be fought, his good and wise men who will be leaders in all goodness. He has his Samuels in the sanctuary to-day." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

## LESSON VII. — May 13.

## DAVID, THE POET-KING. — First Samuel 16 : 1—31 : 13 ; Second Samuel 1 : 1—24 : 25 ; First Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12.

(A Survey of David's Life.)

**PRINT 1 Sam. 16 : 1-13.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Surely goodness and lovingkindness shall follow me all the days of my life.*** — Ps. 23 : 6.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 1.
**Reference Material** : Ps. 51 ; Isa. 9 : 7 ; Jer. 33 : 15–26 ; Luke 1 : 32 ; Acts 2 : 29–34 ; 4 : 25.
**Primary Topic** : A SHEPHERD BOY CHOSEN KING.
**Lesson Material** : 1 Sam. 16 : 1–13.
**Memory Verse** : Jehovah looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. 16 : 7.
**Junior Topic** : GOD CALLS A BOY TO BE KING.
**Lesson Material** : 1 Sam. 16 : 1–13.
**Memory Verse** : 1 Sam. 16 : 7.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : DAVID AS A FRIEND.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary and Junior Classes** stress the choice of the shepherd boy to be king, but get a glimpse of the great life he lived, and especially are told that he wrote many beautiful psalms such as the Twenty-Third Psalm. Describe the life of the shepherd boy in the fields around Bethlehem, and show how that work helped to fit him for his noble career.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes** emphasize the friendship between David

and Jonathan, and study David as a model of the friendships they ought to be cultivating. Show what that friendship must have meant to David all through his career.

**The Young People and Adult Classes** will take a rapid survey of David's entire life. Assign each of the subheads given in the following treatment to a separate student, asking him to discuss in the class that phase of David's life, and draw from it lessons for our lives.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — David was born (Beecher) B.C. 1092 ; anointed, B.C. 1077 ; became king in Judah, B.C. 1063 ; became king of all Israel, B.C. 1055, died, B.C. 1023.

**Place.** — David was born in Bethlehem. He reigned first in Hebron, then in Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The influence of his shepherd life on David.
David as musician and poet.
David as friend.
David as soldier.
David as leader of men.
David's great sin and repentance.
David as a religious leader.
David as husband and father.
David the king and his reign.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Lessons from the Life of David.**

I. DAVID THE SHEPHERD BOY, 1 Sam. 16 : 1–13.
   A new king needed.
   The tall sons rejected.
   The boy chosen.

II. DAVID THE PERSECUTED HERO, 1 Sam. 16 : 14—31 : 13.
   David defeats Goliath.
   David helps Saul.
   David the friend of Jonathan.
   David the noble exile.

III. DAVID THE GREAT KING, 2 Sam. 1 : 1—24 : 25 ; 1 Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12.
   David ascends the throne.
   David promotes religion.
   David's great sin.
   David enters the shadows.
   David's legacy to the world.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Wilberforce's *Heroes of Hebrew History*. *Commentaries* on Samuel by Batten (*Bible for Home and School*), Kirkpatrick (*Cambridge Bible*), H. P. Smith (*International Critical Commentary*), Kennedy (*New Century Bible*), Blaikie (*Expositor's Bible*), Willett (*Studies in the First Book of Samuel*), etc. Books on David by William M. Taylor, F. B. Meyer, W. J. Knox Little, William J. Deane, Krummacher, C. E. Knox. Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*. Miller's *Devotional Hours*. Lewis in *Men of the Old Testament*. Charles Reade's *Bible Characters*. Charles R. Brown's *Five Young Men*. Fleming's *Israel's Golden Age*.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

David, by Ciuffagni, Michelangelo, Fra Angelico, Baldovinetti, Raphael. David Playing to Saul, by Rembrandt. David and Goliath, by Benozzo Gozzoli, Michelangelo, Burne-Jones. David and Bathsheba, by Rubens.

1. And Jehovah said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to Jĕs'-sĕ the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

I. **DAVID THE SHEPHERD BOY**, 1 Sam. 16 : 1–13. A NEW KING NEEDED. "The story of David opens with a dramatic contrast between the fresh hope of his young life and the rejection of the self-willed King Saul, whose course was rapidly descending toward the fatal field of Gilboa. The hot impatience that persisted in offering the sacrifice before Samuel came ; his needless oath and ruthless proposal to take Jonathan's life ; his flagrant disobedience to the distinct charge respecting Amalek — all proved that he was not fit to act as God's vicegerent, and that he must be set aside." — *F. B. Meyer*. With every opportunity to make a success of his life, Saul had made it a failure through his disobedience to God's plain commands. There was nothing to be done but to appoint another king, so clearly had Saul shown his baser characteristics, so determinedly had he chosen the wrong path.

1. **And Jehovah said unto Samuel.** By an audible voice, perhaps, but more likely by a clear impression upon his mind. **How long wilt thou mourn for Saul.** Saul was a wonderful leader of men. Samuel mourned not only because of personal affection for Saul, but because he grieved at the ruin of so promising a career. **Seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel?** God's will in the matter should have been supreme in Samuel's thoughts, and have subdued the sharpness of his personal sorrow. **Fill thy horn with oil, and go.** Southern Palestine was a pastoral country, and the horns of animals were often used as vessels for liquids. The oil was probably

2. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And Jehovah said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah.

3. And call Jĕs′-sĕ to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4. And Samuel did that which Jehovah spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5. And he said, Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah: sanc-

---

the consecrated oil, made for such purposes with especial care and with the admixture of numerous essences. **I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite.** Jesse was the son of Obed, the grandson of Ruth and Boaz, belonging through Boaz to the tribe of Judah; but his personality has left no impress upon history. Regarding David's mother, "David in his psalms styles himself, on more than one occasion, 'the son of God's handmaid'; and this leads us to believe that she had a holy influence upon him, and that it was most likely from her lips that he heard the wondrous story of God's former dealings with his people, as well as the simple, pathetic pastoral of Ruth." — *William M. Taylor.* **For I have provided me a king among his sons.** This was a long look ahead, for David was to spend many years in unconscious preparations for sovereignty, and was not to become king till both Saul and his son Jonathan were dead.

2. **And Samuel said, How can I go?** Thus Moses feared to go before Pharaoh, and Jonah to preach to Nineveh. **If Saul hear it, he will kill me.** "Saul slew the priests of Nob for befriending David when he was a fugitive, 1 Sam. 22 : 9 ff.; Samuel might well have hesitated to instigate a rebellion even against one rejected of God, for Saul still held the position as king." — *Prof. L. W. Batten.* Samuel was usually as brave as a lion, but he was now an old man; and Saul had become almost a maniac in his tempests of ungovernable rage. **And Jehovah said, Take a heifer with thee.** It was a ten-mile journey from Ramah, Samuel's home, five miles north of Jerusalem, to Bethlehem, five miles south. Samuel may have driven the heifer that distance, or he may have procured one nearer Bethlehem. The ark of the covenant was not at this time in the tabernacle but in Kirjath-jearim, so that the offering of sacrifices was not confined to the tabernacle. **And say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah.** "Concealment of a good purpose for a good purpose is clearly justifiable." — *Speaker's Commentary.* "It was perfectly legitimate for Samuel to conceal the primary intention and mention only the secondary object of his visit." — *Prof. A. F. Kirkpatrick.*

3. **And call Jesse to the sacrifice.** Jesse was probably the head man of Bethlehem. He "was evidently a man of some wealth. Mohammedan tradition speaks of him as one who, in addition to his farming pursuits, was famous for his skill in making haircloths and sackcloths." — *Ellicott.* **And I will show thee what thou shalt do.** How often God sends his servants forth in this manner, with their course unknown, just as ship's captains are sometimes sent out with sealed orders, and do not know whither they are bound until they leave port and open the envelope. **And thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.** Anointing was the mode of consecration of the high priest, of certain prophets, and especially of the king. David was anointed three times, — on this occasion, when made king of Judah, and when he became king of all Israel.

4. **And Samuel did that which Jehovah spake.** Prompt obedience was Samuel's greatness from the beginning of his life to the end. **And came to Bethlehem.** From his home in Ramah, ten miles north. **And the elders of the city** (the heads of families) **came to meet him trembling.** "Why had he penetrated to their secluded home? Had any among them been guilty of a crime which the Judge had come to investigate and punish? Or, now that the breach between the king and the prophet had become notorious, would they incur the monarch's displeasure by welcoming the seer?" — *Rev. William J. Deane.* **And said, Comest thou peaceably?** 1 Sam. 15 : 33 shows how terrible Samuel could be.

5. **And he said, Peaceably. I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah.** No errand could be more peaceable; its one aim was peace between God and man. **Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.** This sanctifying was by means of

tify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jĕs′-sĕ and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6. And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Ē-lī′-ăb, and said, Surely Jehovah's anointed is before him.

7. But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for *Jehovah seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart.

8. Then Jĕs′-sĕ called Ă-bĭn′-ă-dăb, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

9. Then Jĕs′-sĕ made Shăm′-măh to pass by. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

10. And Jĕs′-sĕ made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jĕs′-sĕ, Jehovah hath not chosen these.

11. And Samuel said unto Jĕs′-sĕ, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jĕs′-sĕ, Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither.

---

ceremonial washings, the purifying of the body symbolizing the purity of soul which is essential to worship. **And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.** These ablutions were supervised by Samuel, that they might be made in the prescribed way.

6. **And it came to pass, when they were come.** Evidently Samuel did not say why he wished to pass Jesse's sons in review. **That he looked on Eliab.** He was the oldest of the eight sons. **And said, Surely Jehovah's anointed is before him.** This was his thought; he probably said it only to himself, not speaking aloud.

7. **But Jehovah said unto Samuel.** Speaking also through Samuel's thoughts, the impression made by God's Spirit upon Samuel's. **Look not on his countenance.** Saul also was a handsome man; so was Absalom, David's son who was to work so much harm. **Or on the height of his stature.** The feature of Saul's appearance that had aroused special admiration when he was made king. **Because I have rejected him.** As Saul also was rejected, though not for the same reason. **For Jehovah seeth not as man seeth.** Thus also Christ said to the Pharisees (Luke 16 : 15) : "God knoweth your hearts : for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God." **For man looketh on the outward appearance.** "Eliab was a splendid specimen of a man — just the man for a king. But God looks for moral and spiritual greatness, and many a poor cripple or hunchback is more kingly in his sight than the man or the woman whom people turn to gaze after in the street, attracted by beauty of person or grace of movement." — *J. R. Miller.* **But Jehovah looketh on the heart.** "The moral excellence." — *Deane.* "Out of the heart are the issues of life." God looks to see whether our hearts are his or not; if they are, we are all his.

8. **Then Jesse called Abinadab,** who had the same name as one of Saul's sons. He also was rejected.

9. **Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by.** This youth also was not chosen by the Lord.

10. **And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel.** Seven, that is, counting the three already named; and all proved unfit for the solemn anointing. "God humbles human judgment. Not the keenest, wisest, strongest of us is entitled to say who shall be sent on the Lord's errands." — *Joseph Parker.*

11. **And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children?** Samuel was perplexed. A smaller man would have given up in disgust, but the great prophet-judge would leave nothing undone to find out the divine will. **And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest.** There were two daughters also, but Samuel was looking for a king, not a queen. How old David was at this time we are not told, but there seems to have been considerable difference between his age and that of the next youngest brother. Never despise or neglect even the youngest children; they are the hope of the world. **And, behold, he is keeping the sheep.** He was tending the sheep on

12. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.

13. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Rā'-măh.

one of the hill pastures near Bethlehem. "For God he kept them; with God he communed as he changed their pasture, beat off the lion and the bear, and led them to the water's side. The solitariness of his life braced up his spirit, and its dangers formed within him the habit of ready action based on simple trust in his God." — *Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.* We do not know when David began to write his psalms, but some of them are so peaceful, so full of the calmness and simple trust of the shepherd's life, that they may well be assigned to this youthful period. Such especially are Psalms 8, 19, 23, and 29. **And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him.** Samuel did not despair even of the youngest, but gave him his chance with the rest. **For we will not sit down till he come hither.** The sacrifice was to be followed by a meal with the family, to which they would not sit down till David had been seen.

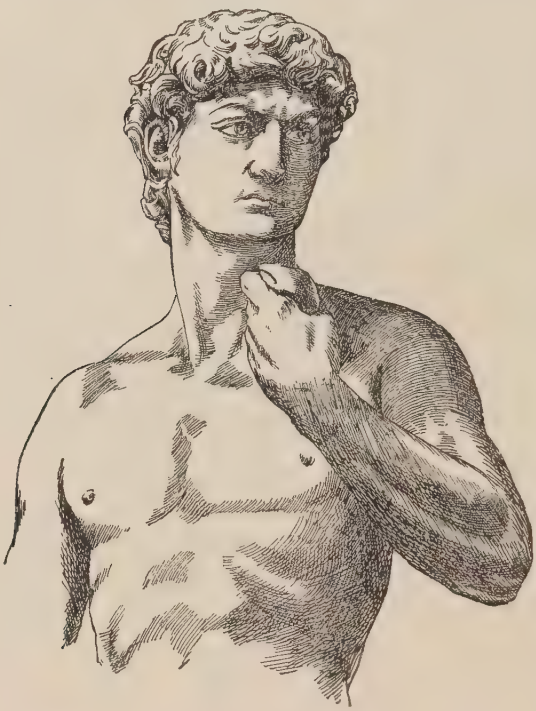
Elizabeth Gardner.
Young David Rescuing the Lamb.
(Detail.)

12. **And he sent, and brought him in.** We can imagine how puzzled the lad was, and how he wondered why he was summoned before the great man whom all the nation revered. **Now he was ruddy.** "The blue of his eyes and beauty of his fair complexion in strong contrast to the darker visages of his companions." — *F. B. Meyer.* "Ruddy" is "generally taken as referring to the color of the skin. Possibly, however, it refers to the color of the hair. It is interesting to think of David as the *red-haired* 'darling of the songs of Israel' (2 Sam. 23:1); or, as Browning has it in his 'Saul,' 'God's child with his dew on thy gracious gold hair.'" — *Prof. A. R. S. Kennedy.* **And withal of a beautiful countenance.** "A youth of fine eyes," Prof. H. P. Smith translates it. **And goodly to look upon.** "These last words give the general idea of the beauty of his face and person." — *Pulpit Commentary.* **And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.** "Samuel had been pleased by the appearance of the older sons, but David fulfilled his ideal at once." — *Dean H. L. Willett.* The Spirit witnessed to his spirit that the chosen one stood before him.

13. **Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him.** Under the circumstances, this was one of the most courageous acts ever performed. **In the midst of his brethren.** They do not seem to have realized the meaning of the anointing; perhaps the whole family merely understood Samuel to claim David as a pupil in one of the schools of the prophets which he superintended. **And the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward.** This was the case with Saul also after he was anointed (1 Sam. 10:6, 10). Without the presence with him of God's Holy Spirit David could not have done the great work that he accomplished. David's name is here first mentioned. It means "beloved," and is borne by no other Bible character. **So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.** In consecrating David to the throne he had placed the crown upon his own life.

II. **DAVID THE PERSECUTED HERO**, 1 Sam. 16:14—31:13. DAVID DEFEATS GOLIATH. The first opportunity of the young shepherd boy to achieve

his high destiny arose in connection with a formidable attack made by the Philistines, Israel's hereditary enemy on the coast. They came up from the west, and pitched camp southwest of Jerusalem, the forces of King Saul opposite, a brook between at the bottom of the little valley. Jesse's three oldest sons were among Saul's troops, but David was kept in the fields. One day, however, he was sent with food to his brothers, and saw with his own eyes what had been going on for forty days : Goliath, a gigantic warrior more than ten feet tall, clad in complete armor, advanced from the invading host and challenged any Israelite to meet him in combat. There was no reply, and he withdrew in triumph amid the insulting shouts of his friends.



David. Michelangelo.

David could not endure this. The honor of his God and his country was at stake. In spite of the ridicule of his brothers and the attempted dissuasion of Saul, the lad insisted on appearing as the champion of Israel. Rejecting the armor which Saul pressed upon him, as it would be a hindrance rather than a help, David met the boastful and mocking giant with only his shepherd's sling and five smooth pebbles from the brook, — these, and his superb confidence in Jehovah, which he asserted manfully in answer to Goliath's jeers and threats. The first pebble, slung with the unerring accuracy of long practice while guarding his sheep, sank in the giant's heedlessly exposed forehead, and David ran and decapitated the fallen Philistine with his own great sword. Then followed a joyful onrush of the Israelites and a headlong rout of the Philistines, after which David was acclaimed the national hero, superior in might to Saul the king.

" Goliath's insult was a symbol of the insulting attitude of worldliness towards religion. Brute force and power paraded themselves as contemptuous of the power of the Spirit. Religion cannot hold its own against the powers of the world except by spiritual forces and trust in God." — *Canon W. J. Knox Little.* These spiritual forces and this faith in the heavenly were manifested by David through all his life.

David Helps Saul. After his rejection by Jehovah, announced to him so solemnly by Samuel, Saul was subject to frequent fits of melancholy passing into active insanity. Music is a palliative of this fearful condition, and David was sent for to calm the agitated monarch with his minstrelsy. The young musician and poet played upon his harp and sang his beautiful songs, doubtless also addressing the frenzied king with the persuasive eloquence which he knew so well how to use. So gentle and healthful was his influence that he never failed to bring Saul out of his fits of madness ; and for this, as well as for his famous victory over Goliath, David became firmly attached to the court. Thus early were the songs of the inspired psalmist honored by God and a blessing to man.

David the Friend of Jonathan. The relation between David and Saul's son Jonathan supplies us with one of the most touching and beautiful stories of all time. Though Jonathan was the heir apparent, and though he might easily have

become jealous of another young man so likely to surpass him in fame, not an atom of jealousy entered Jonathan's soul. He formed with David a spiritual alliance that has remained the world's classic pattern of friendship. Even when Saul gave his daughter to be David's wife, Jonathan did not fail his new brother-in-law. Even when Saul planned to kill David, Jonathan expostulated with his crazy father and warned his friend to flee. When the king's insane hostility drove David into exile,

David and Saul.

Painted by Simeon Solomon. Reproduced from a photograph owned by Rev. Henry E. Jackson.

the two friends renewed their covenant, and parted with much weeping and with many embraces. And at last, when the brave and noble young prince fell at the battle of Gilboa, David sang for him and for Saul a lament unexcelled in all poetic literature :

> "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!
> I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
> Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
> Thy love to me was wonderful,
> Passing the love of woman."

Like all the greatest characters of history, like Moses, Elijah, Paul, like Jesus Christ himself, David is conspicuous for the number and high character of his friends.

David the Noble Exile. "When estimating David's character, the soreness, the meanness of his trials must be taken into account. He was made an outlaw, with only a band of outlaws as his followers — brave, but unscrupulous. Hunted from cave to cave, betrayed for any price by any evil-disposed passer-by, his own generous impulses met on Saul's part with studied bad faith — the wonder is that he was not swept by a flood of angry passions into infamy." — *Rev. H. Elvet Lewis.*

Once during this miserable period David was driven into the camp of the national enemies, the Philistines. Later, he delivered a town from their hands. Twice Saul was in David's power, but David magnanimously let him go unharmed. He protected Nabal from marauders and expected from him a gift of food for his hungry followers ; when the churl refused, he would have punished him severely but he was moved by the intercession of Abigail, whom he afterwards married. This wilderness period of David's life corresponds to the exile of Moses in the land of Midian, to the training of Elijah in Gilead, to the life of John the Baptist in the same Judæan wilderness ; it strengthened his body, quickened his mind, gave him a firmer control of other men and a deeper trust in God. It was a hard school, but one of the greatest value.

III. **DAVID THE GREAT KING**, 2 Sam. 1 : 1—24 : 25 ; 1 Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12. David Ascends the Throne. In the battle of Gilboa the Philistines slew Saul's three sons, and after the battle Saul fell on his own sword, thus closing his dynasty and handing over the kingdom to David who had proved himself so worthy of it. There remained, however, a fourth son of Saul, Ish-bosheth, whom Abner,

Saul's general, tried to place on the throne ; but he proved too weak for sovereignty, and was finally murdered, David indignantly executing the murderers. Besides, there was a son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, who could not be king because he was a cripple ; and David cared for him with great generosity.

Hebron was David's capital for seven and one-half years, when his sway was accepted mainly by Judah, though many of the strongest leaders from all parts of the land joined him there. Jerusalem, however, was soon captured from the Jebusites, and became "the city of David," his almost impregnable fortress, and from that day the central city of the Jewish race. The heights were walled and fortified, and there David built for himself a beautiful palace. All the nation owned his sway after the death of Ish-bosheth.

From an old print.
King David.

David proved his valor (which did not need further proof) by decisive victories over the Philistines on the west, the Edomites on the south, the Moabites on the southeast, and all the tribes on the east of the Jordan, fighting till he even subdued Damascus and extended his dominions even to the Euphrates. In all these wars, David "was never 'fighting for his own hand,' but always for the cause of God and the one people who held up the cause of truth ; and in his vigor, and deep religious sense, amidst whatever faults, he endeavored to set before him the welfare of his people, and the cause of God. He was in every sense *David, the King!*" —*Canon Knox Little.*

David Promotes Religion. "As a pious follower of Jehovah, in whose name he had united the tribes of Israel and achieved the liberation of his country, David felt it incumbent on him to encourage the national worship, and to set his people an example of devotion. He therefore resolved to make Jerusalem the religious as well as political center of Israel." — *Prof. J. D. Fleming.* This he did by establishing the tabernacle in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and bringing to it, with great rejoicings, the ark which had lain for about a century at Kiriath-jearim. He wished to build a magnificent temple to Jehovah, but he was hindered by the prophet Nathan ; it was not meet that a man of war should build the house of the God of peace. Therefore David contented himself with laying up a great store of gold and silver which his son Solomon afterwards used in building his magnificent temple, one of the seven wonders of the world.

But the inestimable work which David did for religion was the development of music in the tabernacle service, and especially the writing of his psalms. Of the one hundred and fifty psalms in the Book of Psalms more are attributed in their titles to David than to any other author : all but four in the First Book (Ps. 1–41), nearly all in the Third Book, two in the Fourth, and fifteen in the Fifth ; in all seventy-three psalms, or nearly half of the collection. Most of the other psalms whose authors are named are by David's singers.

"The Psalms have a fascination from which we cannot escape. They appeal to our Christian conscience and our Christian emotions. They are the best expression of our feelings in our purest and healthiest moments. The words are the words we want ; they are written for us." — *Bishop of Worcester.*

David's Great Sin. In David's day loose ideas in regard to marriage prevailed, and David had a number of wives according to the custom of the time. This led to many evils, but David's greatest sin was his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband, Uriah, by ordering him placed in the forefront of battle and left there to perish. For this terrible double sin David was sternly rebuked by the prophet Nathan, and he swiftly saw his own wickedness. His confession was complete, his repentance was deep and sincere. His Fifty-First Psalm is the noblest expression of sorrow for sin ever made. We cannot doubt that David was forgiven, for he ap-

pealed to the infinite mercy of God. "David was greatest of all in penitence, man's most redeeming quality. He never saw a sin in himself that he did not mourn and weep for it, heart, soul, and body." — *Charles Reade.*

David Enters the Shadows. But even the truest sorrow for sin does not annul the dire results of sin. Among these in David's case were the dissensions that clouded his closing years. The partiality he showed toward Bathsheba's son Solomon roused the jealous anger of his older sons, Absalom and Adonijah. David had to face revolt in his own family. The conspiracy of Absalom forced him to flee from Jerusalem. It cost the life of Absalom, and brought to David unutterable grief. Adonijah's plotting was frustrated by prompt action. There was also Sheba's rebellion, threatening a break between Judah and the northern tribes, but ending with the slaying of Sheba.

Thus the last days of this great man were sorely embittered, and David bore in his heart to the last his wrath against Shimei who had cursed him and his indignation at the ruthlessness of his faithful general, Joab. However, those closing months were full of David's courage and manliness, and nothing in his life was finer than his last charge to his son Solomon, who was to succeed him (1 Kings 2 : 1–4), and whom he counselled earnestly to walk in the ways of the Lord.

David's Legacy to the World. "Few have had so varied a career as he : shepherd and monarch ; poet and soldier ; champion of his people and outlaw in

Photograph by Bonfils.

Tomb of David.

the caves of Judæa ; beloved of Jonathan, and persecuted by Saul ; vanquishing the Philistines one day, and accompanying them into battle on another. But in all he seemed possessed of a special power with God and man." — *F. B. Meyer.* It was God's Spirit dwelling within him, sometimes resisted, more often sweetly followed. David is for all time an example — only a partial yet a very precious example — of what God can do in and through an obedient soul.

"David is the widest character on record — a shepherd, a soldier, a courtier, a famous friend, a fugitive, a general, a king, a statesman, an exile, a priest, a prophet, a saint, a criminal, a penitent : and nothing by halves." — *Charles Reade.*

"David came to the throne at the age of thirty, and he reigned over Israel for forty years. His name was handed down in human history as that of the greatest king that Israel ever had. He never could have done it but for the fact that he had in his heart faith and hope and love towards God and towards his fellow men. He was a man of deep and genuine piety. When William IV. of England passed away there was a young girl of sixteen named Victoria who was spending the night in Kensington Palace. Word was suddenly brought to her that the King was dead and that she was Queen of England. She immediately fell upon her knees imploring divine help and guidance in the discharge of the high duties which had been thrust upon her. May it not be that this was one secret of her beneficent reign which lasted more than sixty years ? The rulers who begin the ascent of their thrones upon their knees rise high because their eyes are upon that Great White Throne which is the final seat of all authority and of all blessing." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

## LESSON VIII. — May 20.

## ELIJAH, THE BRAVE REFORMER. — 1 Kings 17 : 1—19 : 21; 21 : 1–29; 2 Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12.

(A Survey of Elijah's Life.)

**PRINT 1 Kings 18 : 30–39.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Choose you this day whom you will serve.* — Josh. 24 : 15.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 2.
**Reference Material** : Mal. 4 : 5, 6 ; Matt. 11 : 14 ; 16 : 14 ; 17 : 3, 4, 10, 12 ; 27 : 46–49 ; Luke 1 : 17 ; John 1 : 21–25 ; Rom. 11 : 2–4 ; Jas. 5 : 17, 18.
**Primary Topic** : Elijah and a Poor Woman.
**Lesson Material** : 1 Kings 17 : 8–24. Print 1 Kings 17 : 8–16.
**Memory Verse** : To them that love God all things work together for good. Rom. 8 : 28.
**Junior Topic** : Elijah's Wonderful Victory.
**Lesson Material** : 1 Kings 18 : 16–39. Print 1 Kings 18 : 30–39.
**Memory Verse** : Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Josh. 24 : 15.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : How Elijah Defied Wickedness.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : What Modern Reformers Can Learn from Elijah.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** are to study the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath, bringing out the lessons of kindness and of trust in God. Bring to the class a small stone jar with a little meal in it and a flask containing a little oil. Tell the pupils that these correspond to our bread and butter. Relate the story and then question the pupils on it, applying it to the kindnesses they may do to others, especially by sharing their good things with them.

**The Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Classes** will focus attention on the Carmel contest, using it as an illustration of standing for the right against whatever odds. The same principle may be illustrated from all of Elijah's life, which should be passed in swift review. To this end, in the older classes at least, divide the events among the pupils in advance, having each write a chapter, which he will read to the class.

**The Young People and Adults** will study the whole of Elijah's life, seeking to draw from it lessons for modern reformers. The various sections outlined below should be divided among the students, each to report upon his section in the class, with its bearings on present-day reform.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Elijah's announcement of the great drought was made (Beecher) B.C. 912 ; the contest on Carmel, B.C. 909 ;

Convent on Mt. Carmel. From a photograph

the killing of Naboth, B.C. 906; the translation of Elijah, B.C. 900.

**Place.** — The principal event of Elijah's life, the victory over the Baal priests, took place on Mount Carmel, a range of hills about eight miles long extending westward from central Palestine, and ending in a promontory jutting into the Mediterranean.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Elijah's chief characteristics.
The secret of Elijah's power.
Elijah's opponents — Ahab, Jezebel, the heathen priests — compared with the opponents of Christians to-day.
Elijah's miracles compared with Christ's.
Elijah compared with John the Baptist.
Elijah as an example for modern reformers.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT : How Elijah Defied Wickedness.

I. Elijah's Wonderful Preservation, 1 Kings 17 : 1–24.

The bold prophecy.
The attendant ravens.
The generous widow.
The restored son.

II. Elijah's Victory over Baal, 1 Kings 18 : 1—19 : 21.

Timid Obadiah.
The confident challenge.
Fire from heaven.
A woman's threat.
The still small voice.

III. The Faithful Prophet Honored, 1 Kings 21 : 1–29; 2 Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12.

Naboth stoned.
Ahab condemned.
Ahaziah rebuked.
The chariot of fire.
What modern reformers can learn from Elijah.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Elijah, by Burne-Jones, by Sargent (Frieze of the Prophets, Boston Public Library). Elijah and the Widow's Son, by Madox Brown. Elijah Fed by the Angel, by Tintoretto, by Doré. Elijah's Ascent in the Chariot of Fire, by Doré.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*Elijah the Prophet*, by William M. Taylor. *Elijah, His Life and Times*, by Milligan. *Elijah and the Secret of His Power*, by F. B. Meyer. Macduff's *The Prophet of Fire*. George Lansing Taylor's long and spirited poem, *Elijah the Reformer*. Chapters in Gordon's *Prophets of the Old Testament*, Willett's *Moral Leaders of Israel*, Wilberforce's *Heroes of Bible History*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*, Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament*, Geikie's *Old Testament Characters* and *Landmarks of Old Testament History*, Greenhough's *Half-Hours in God's Older Picture Gallery*, Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, Rowlands in *Men of the Old Testament*, Ewing's *Elijah and Ahab*. Macintyre's *Elijah and Elisha*. Maurice's *Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament*.

---

I. **ELIJAH'S WONDERFUL PRESERVATION**, 1 Kings 17 : 1–24. The Bold Prophecy. Elijah's name is a compound of the two common Hebrew names for the Deity, and means "Jehovah is my God."

His home was Tishbe (therefore he was called "the Tishbite"), a place in Gilead, the wild, hilly, and thickly wooded region east of Samaria, to the east of the Jordan.

Nothing is known concerning his parentage or his mode of life before his sudden and startling appearance in the history. He was evidently a man of profound religious convictions, and he had long grieved over the degradation of his people, for the nation was rapidly falling into the most debasing heathenism. Ahab, king of the northern tribes, was a brave warrior and a capable executive, but he was as putty in the hands of Jezebel, the queen. This evil woman was a heathen, the daughter of the king of Zidon, and she had introduced into Israel the base Phœnician idolatries, the worship of Baal with cruel and licentious rites.

Before this king appeared Elijah, of whom we must think as a rough, sinewy, bronzed outdoor man, a shaggy sheepskin mantle thrown over his shoulders. He presented the strongest possible contrast to Ahab's glittering and elegant court.

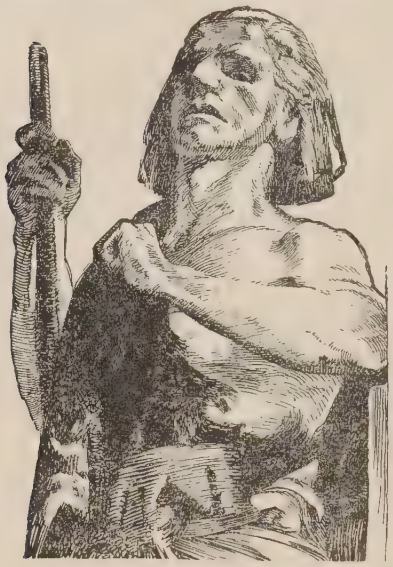
With abrupt words, sternly and plainly, the forest prophet gave his message. It was of terrible omen in that land of frequent famines: "*As the Lord, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*"

Elijah gave no reason: the king's uneasy conscience and the mention of Jehovah would supply that. He declared his allegiance: he stood before Jehovah as his officer and not before the recreant Ahab. He asserted his authority over the predicted drought, and he departed as suddenly and mysteriously as he had come.

The Attendant Ravens. Having thus boldly begun his public service, Elijah withdrew to prepare himself by long prayer and thoughtful meditation for the still greater work that lay before him. Such a period of preparation was enjoyed by most of the great men of the Bible — by Moses for forty years in Midian, by John the

Baptist in the desert, by Paul at the feet of Gamaliel and in Arabia, and by our Lord himself in the wilderness and in the thirty quiet years preceding in Nazareth.

Elijah's first place of retirement was "by the brook Cherith," one of the many ravines leading down to the Jordan. It was probably east of the river, and in the Gilead district from which he came. There the prophet was providentially sustained, for the brook supplied water in the midst of the general drought, and ravens (a very slight difference in the word — *'arābīm* instead of *'ōrēbīm* — would make it "Arabs") brought him meat and bread every morning and evening. Whether the ravine birds or the wilderness men brought the food, we are plainly to regard Elijah's preservation as providential. His experience by the brook Cherith taught him what we all need to learn, that God is with his obedient servants, and will protect and preserve them in any task to which he sends them. The Cherith flows through innumerable lives to-day.



Sargent's Elijah.
From the "Frieze of the Prophets," Boston Public Library.

THE GENEROUS WIDOW. But Elijah had to learn another lesson: not merely trust in God, but fellowship with man. Thus it was that the Lord allowed the brook to dry up, "although it would have been as easy for the Almighty to supply water by miracle as either flesh or bread." — *Prof. W. Milligan, D.D.*

Strangely enough, the prophet of Jehovah was next led to a heathen country, Phœnicia, and to Zarephath, a small town between Tyre and Zidon. There he found a poor widow with one son, who with heroic self-sacrifice shared with Elijah her last remaining bit of food, and was rewarded by a miraculous renewal of meal in the barrel and of oil (used as we use butter) in the cruse, until the very end of the drought and famine.

Elijah was taught by this experience the lesson which Jesus himself pointed out (Luke 4 : 25, 26), that God has other peoples than the Chosen People, and that the ministry of God's servants must be as wide as the love of God. They are to serve all men, and be served by all men.

THE RESTORED SON. Elijah must have remained at Zarephath the greater part of two years, doubtless spending much time in communion with God in the solitudes of Mount Carmel, doubtless teaching at least the widow and her son about the true God. These teachings were confirmed by a marvellous event, no less than the restoring of the widow's son to life through the fervent prayers of Elijah. It was such a miracle as Elisha was later to work for the son of the Shunammite, a miracle like Christ's raising from the dead the only son of the widow of Nain. This miracle must have been a wonderful encouragement to Elijah, giving him the confident faith by which he worked the great miracle on Carmel not long afterward. As for the widow, her rejoicings took the most fitting of all forms, a glad acknowledgment of Jehovah and his truth.

II. **ELIJAH'S VICTORY OVER BAAL**, 1 Kings 18 : 1—19 : 21. TIMID OBADIAH. We are told by Jesus and again by his earthly brother James (Luke 4 : 25 ; Jas. 5 : 17) that the great drought and famine lasted for three years and six months. It was most severe in Samaria, but it extended through Galilee at least to Phœnicia. Ahab and Jezebel certainly knew why it was sent, but they and their people still clung to their idolatries. The next task of Elijah was to bring home to them the awful truth of the power of the God whom they had so offended.

Once more the word of the Lord came to Elijah, bidding him show himself to Ahab. The act would be full of peril. Jezebel had been persecuting Jehovah's prophets with intense malignity. Ahab had searched for Elijah up and down Israel and in all neighboring lands. The famine had grown so terrible that the king himself, with

30. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was thrown down.

---

Obadiah the governor of his palace, had set out on a tour of inspection in a personal hunt for water. What chance for his life would Elijah have if he presented himself before Ahab under such circumstances? Nevertheless he did not hesitate an instant, but at once obeyed the divine command. Indeed, he had no fear save of disobedience.

The peril of the situation was emphasized when Elijah fell in — not with Ahab, but with Obadiah. This Obadiah, though a true-hearted follower of Jehovah and a man of authority and power, yet trembled and hesitated when Elijah bade him tell the king that he was there. Only after Elijah's solemn assurance that he would await Ahab's arrival did Obadiah consent to go on the hazardous errand; and even then, we may be sure, he went with his heart in his mouth.

THE CONFIDENT CHALLENGE. "Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" exclaimed the blustering Ahab when he saw Elijah, quite heedless of the fact that not the prophet, but the king and queen, were the troublers of Israel. That is always the way of wickedness, to try to hide behind the smoke-screen of blame of some one else. With a few stern words Elijah told Ahab the truth about himself, but did not linger on that unworthy subject. He spoke as the king's superior, and commanded him to summon all Israel to Mount Carmel, and especially the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the shameful Asherah who were Jezebel's protégés. The latter do not seem to have come, but Ahab, in fear or hope, speedily sent out his runners and got together a great crowd, with the Baal prophets, on the crest of Mount Carmel, at the eastern end of the high ridge overlooking the large and famous plain of Esdraelon. Here was enacted one of the most striking scenes of Old Testament history.

"No living eye till then had witnessed an assemblage so grand in a need so dire as that which the despair and hope of king and people now gathered at Elijah's word upon the heights of Carmel. From its summit they see the Mediterranean dotted with the merchant ships of Tyre and Zidon. Yonder may be descried, far off, the Sea of Galilee gleaming in the morning sun; and as the eye sweeps round to the southward, the plain of Jezreel, and Mount Tabor shooting up out of it. In the center of the multitude the court prophets of Baal are gathered to confront the rude son of the desert, the solitary prophet of Jehovah. Then for the first time both king and people heard proclaimed the vital principle of true religion — no compromise of truth. The stern prophet brings them squarely to the issue, with a single sentence, whose tones thrill them as though Carmel shook under their feet. 'How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.' And, we are told, 'the people answered him not a word.' Carried to its mark by the spirit of God, the shaft quivers in ten thousand consciences; Baal is already defeated." — *Hastings.*

Elijah's challenge was bold and unmistakable. Each party was to place a bullock on an altar, without fire, and the true God was to be the one that answered the prayers of his servants by sending fire from heaven to consume the bullock. No more thorough test could have been devised.

FIRE FROM HEAVEN. Elijah proposed that the Baal priests should make the first trial, since they were so many — four hundred and fifty — and he was but one. They therefore dressed their sacrifice and placed it on their altar, calling on Baal to send fire upon it. From morning till noon they prayed in vain. Then Elijah began to mock them, shouting to them so that all their followers could hear: "Scream louder! Your god is in a brown study! Maybe he is off on a journey! Perhaps he is asleep! Scream louder! Wake him up!" Stung to madness by these taunts, the Baal priests began actually to scream their prayers, and worked themselves into such a pitch of frenzy that they began to cut themselves with knives and lances till they dripped with blood. This they did until near sunset, "but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Never was the emptiness and folly of idolatry more conspicuously shown.

30. **And Elijah said unto all the people.** "Elijah says nothing to the priests. He leaves them to continue their frantic gesticulations and wild prayers, if they please." — *Speaker's Commentary.* **Come near unto me; and all the people came near**

31. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of Jehovah came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.

32. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood.

34. And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it the third time.

35. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the *evening* oblation,

---

**unto him**. Elijah wished them to watch all his movements, and see that he did not set fire to the wood secretly. **And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was thrown down**. In former days the people had built altars to the true God on hilltops, and had worshipped there, but not with idolatrous ceremonies. Ahab (1 Kings 19 : 10) had recently broken down all altars to Jehovah that he could find.

31. **And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob**. Elijah thought of the twelve tribes as still, in the eyes of God, a single nation. He did not recognize their sinful division into two hostile kingdoms. Thus our Saviour prayed regarding his followers "that they all may be one." **Unto whom the word of Jehovah came**. God had highly honored the nation in the old days, when they honored and obeyed him. **Saying, Israel shall be thy name**. The northern tribes had taken the name of Israel as exclusively theirs, but it belonged to Judah and Benjamin as much as to them.

32. **And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah**. Elijah made it plain that he was building no altar to Baal, but one to Jehovah; perhaps he dedicated it with a prayer to the true God. **And he made a trench about the altar**. Elijah may not have done the work himself: "A trench was dug at his request." — *Cunningham Geikie*. **As great as would contain two measures** (seahs) **of seed**. The seah was a measure containing about two and one-half gallons; a ditch that would contain a five-gallon measure. Others say that a seah was a measure of area, about nine hundred square yards, as much land as a seah of seed would sow; here, therefore, eighteen hundred square yards, — that is, a trench enclosing that area. The first conjecture appears the more reasonable.

33. **And he put the wood in order**. The whole proceeding was orderly, in conformity with the law given through Moses (Lev. 1 : 3–9), an acted sermon on the need of respect for the law of God which the people had so shamelessly disregarded. **And cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood**. In the way appointed for the temple service. **And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood**. These were such water-jars or pitchers as maidens carried on their heads, bringing water from the village wells. Nearby was a never-failing spring, fed from the dews that the high ridge condensed from the moist air of the Mediterranean. The spring still exists at the spot.

34. **And he said, Do it the second time . . . the third time**. Jehovah does not fear testings of his power, if they are made in a humble and not a vainglorious spirit. Thus our Lord satisfied the doubts of Thomas by a special appearance, bidding the disciple touch him and make sure he was no ghost. In addition to guarding against the possibility of imposture, "probably the pouring out of the water had a symbolical purpose: Jehovah was about to answer by fire, but he was also going to give rain." — *Peake's Commentary*.

35. **And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water**. More than the overflow from the altar was required to fill the trench. Elijah made the miracle as convincing as possible.

36. **And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation**. "The evening sacrifice was probably offered then, as it certainly was at a later day, at the

that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37. Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again.

38. Then the fire of Jehovah fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God.

---

ninth hour." — *Pulpit Commentary*. That is, three o'clock in the afternoon. **That Elijah the prophet came near.** He may have withdrawn in secret prayer during the preparations. **And said, O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel.** "This solemn address would carry back the thoughts of the pious to the burning bush of Horeb, and the words there spoken (Ex. 3 : 6, 15, 16 ; 4 : 5) ; for there only had this mysterious formula been used before. Its use now was calculated to stir their faith and prepare them in some degree for God's answering *by fire*." — *Speaker's Commentary*. **Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel.** That had been the terms of Elijah's challenge : the deity that answered by fire should be regarded as the true God. **And that I am thy servant.** This was an appeal to God to honor Elijah's faithful service, not for Elijah's sake, but for the sake of God's cause which he had espoused so courageously. **And that I have done all these things at thy word.** "These things" included the prophecy of the drought, the assembling of the people, and the proposal of the test.

37. **Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me.** Elijah's prayer is an earnest one, but not frantic, like the Baalite prayers. He knew that he would not be "heard for his much speaking." **That this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God.** God will accomplish wonders for and through those whose aim is solely to exalt his name. **And that thou hast turned their heart back again.** Elijah had faith to believe that the people's hearts would turn back to God, and his prayer trustfully regarded itself as already answered ; compare Mark 11 : 24.

38. **Then the fire of Jehovah fell.** We may well believe that God used a flash of lightning as the natural means of the miracle, which was plainly a supernatural occurrence. Elijah was the prophet of fire — the fire of the Spirit in his heart, fiery words on his tongue, fire from heaven attending him at the great crises of his life. **And consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust.** "Nothing could be more complete, and Elijah needed only to be silent, and to let the Lord work." — *Prof. W. Milligan*. **And licked up the water that was in the trench.** "Let us not think that this is an old-world tale, never to be repeated. The fire still waits for the Promethean faith that can bring it down. Our God is a consuming fire ; and when his presence is sought he will descend, overcoming all obstacles, and converting a drenched and dripping sacrifice into food on which he himself can feed." — *F. B. Meyer*.

39. **And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces.** They were laid prone in awe and reverence, as was Saul when he saw the great light on the Damascus road. **And they said, Jehovah, he is God ; Jehovah, he is God.** They answered rightly the question which Elijah had propounded. This is "the grand question which faces every man : 'Who is your God — Baal, or Jehovah ? sin, or the Holy One ? self, or God ? mammon, or Christ ?' This is the question which each one of us has to settle for himself." — *William M. Taylor*. On our answer depends our happiness and usefulness, now and forever.

THE EXECUTION OF THE PROPHETS. The priests of Baal had been unmoved by the three years of drought and famine ; they would be unmoved by their own failure and by the overwhelming evidence of the truth of Jehovah. They had persistently corrupted the people with all foulness. They had slain the priests of Jehovah and sought to slay his prophet. Their lives were forfeit under the law of God given through Moses (Deut. 13 : 6–9), and their death was necessary for the public welfare, for the completion of the reform which Elijah sought. Therefore the stern

prophet ordered them taken to the foot of the mountain to the River Kishon and there executed, he himself taking the lead in this act of justice. Elijah would have no paltering with evil.

A Woman's Threat. Now comes an evidence — to be added to many others — of the Bible's honesty in depicting the weakness of even its greatest heroes. Before the day closed Jezebel sent to Elijah a message threatening his life, and the mighty prophet, whose opportunity to work a reform was never so great and the need for whom was never so pressing, speeded away to the south in headlong and ignominious flight! "A sense of the dreariness of a wasted life overspread his soul. He cast himself down, in the breathless solitude of the desert, under the poor shelter of a juniper bush, and poured out his soul to God. Alone and weary, he prayed for death: 'It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.'" — *Hastings.*

It was the inevitable reaction after tremendous exertions, physical and spiritual. The higher the mountain, the deeper the valley; the greater the man, the more profound are the periods of depression he must expect and guard against.

The Still Small Voice. Sustained and encouraged by food from heaven prepared by an angel, Elijah sped on southward to the majestic mountain ranges of Sinai; and there on Mount Horeb, the sacred mountain where Jehovah had revealed the Law to Moses, this great successor of Moses received an even more significant revelation of the Most High — not in the hurricane that rent the rocks, not in the appalling earthquake, not in the devouring flame of the lightning, but in the still small voice (the "sound of gentle stillness"). This voice spoke to his soul, bidding him rely on love rather than force, on patience rather than violence. And he was told to anoint as his successor in the spiritual leadership of Israel a man of peace and quietness, Elisha.

III. **THE FAITHFUL PROPHET HONORED**, 1 Kings 21 : 1–29; 2 Kings 1 : 1—2 : 12. Naboth Stoned. Elijah's work during the closing years of his life seems to have been wisely devoted to training, in the "schools of the prophets," as many young men as possible who would cherish his ideals and follow in his footsteps. The one conspicuous occasion when he emerged from this comparative seclusion was when he was needed to defend the rights of the common people. Ahab coveted a vineyard belonging to Naboth, to round out his palace grounds; and when Naboth, with the Jew's deep attachment to his ancestral land, refused to sell, Jezebel brought false charges against Naboth and procured his judicial murder. Ahab then taking possession of the desired field. It was just such a wrong as to stir the blood of a reformer, and there are to-day many similar oppressions of the poor that call for Elijahs to condemn them. Too long hours, too small pay, unhealthy working conditions, uncertainty of work, profiteering in the goods that the poor must buy — such wrongs as these repeat the story of Naboth.

Ahab Condemned. The meeting of Elijah and Ahab in the vineyard of the slain Naboth is one of the most dramatic scenes of history. We see the guilty king cowering before the stern messenger of God. He believed Elijah when the prophet announced the destruction of himself and his wicked queen, and the fall of his royal house. He was driven to repentance by the threatened doom, and his sorrow was so deep and sincere that the penalty was postponed. This repentance is the best thing we know about Ahab.

Ahaziah Rebuked. What was apparently Elijah's last public act was in connection with the sickness of Ahab's son and successor, the evil-minded Ahaziah, who had had a bad fall. He sent messengers to the heathen god Baal-zebub to ask whether he was to get well again, but Elijah met the messengers and turned them back with the question, "Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub?" In hot wrath the king sent a company of soldiers to seize Elijah, but fire from heaven destroyed them. In like manner a second company was slain. The third company was saved in response to the prayer of its captain, and Elijah went with it to the king, rebuking him for his idolatry, and foretelling his death, which soon took place. Thus the close of Elijah's public life followed up the victory on Mount Carmel. In a remarkable degree Elijah's career was a unit.

The Chariot of Fire. For the last time, accompanied by the faithful Elisha, Elijah went the round of the schools of the prophets. At Beth-el, and again at Jericho, Elisha was saddened by the premonitions of the young prophets that his master would be taken from him. The two crossed the Jordan opposite Jericho, the waters retreating when struck by Elijah's mantle, and there, in a chariot of fire with

horses of fire, the great leader of Israel was swept away into the skies by a mighty whirlwind. "Elijah's end was in keeping with his career. He came like a whirlwind, he burned like a fire, and in fire and whirlwind he disappeared." — *Hastings.* Thus was Elijah honored greatly in his death, and like honor awaits all heroic souls who battle for the right. In life they meet many trials,

"But still a firm and faithful trust
Supports, consoles the pure and just:
Serene, though sad, they feel life's joys expire;
And bitter though the death pang be,
Their spirits through its tortures see
Elijah's car of light, Elijah's steeds of fire." — *Winthrop Mackworth Praed.*

What Modern Reformers Can Learn from Elijah. Elijah centered his thought on the main thing, obedience to God. The nation might be outwardly strong and rich, but he knew that, if it disobeyed God, it was really weak and poor.

Elijah dared to be in a minority of one — with God. He dared to confront the most powerful evil, with the Almighty on his side.

Elijah believed in the invisible. He leaned on supernatural aid. He was a man of prayer and so a man of power.

Elijah used no polite and soft terms in speaking of evil. He called a sin a sin.

Elijah was invincible while he was doing God's will. His only defeat was when he feared Jezebel, forgetting God.

Elijah was consistent because he kept close to God. His life was crowned with great honor because it was a Godlike life.

In all its essentials, Elijah's life may be copied by any reformer to-day. And every Christian should be a reformer.

## LESSON IX. — May 27.

## ISAIAH, THE STATESMAN-PROPHET. — 2 Kings 18 : 13—20 : 19; Isaiah 1 : 1; 6 : 1–13.

(A Survey of Isaiah's Life.)

**PRINT Isa. 6 : 1–8.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Here am I; send me.* — Isa. 6 : 8.

**Devotional Reading** : Isa. 12.
**Reference Material** : 2 Chron. 26 : 22; 32 : 20, 32; Isa. 1 : 5; 7 : 1–17; 8 : 1–4, 16–18; 9 : 1–7; 11 : 1–10; 28 — 31; 36 : 1 — 39 : 8.
**Primary Topic** : Isaiah, Who Was Ready.
**Lesson Material** : Isa. 6 : 1–8.
**Memory Verse** : Here am I; send me. Isa. 6 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : Isaiah's Call to Service.
**Lesson Material** : Isa. 6 : 1–8.
**Memory Verse** : Isa. 6 : 8.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Isaiah's Work for His People.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Isaiah, the Statesman-Prophet.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will study only Isaiah's call to service, with just a glimpse of the great leader that Isaiah became. Make the vision very vivid, relating it yourself and then getting the children to tell it back to you. Ask them what work for God is calling upon them, in their homes, their school, the Sunday school, the young people's society, the church, their neighborhood, and among their friends. God does not give every one a vision of himself, but he gives every one a vision of his work.

**The Older Classes** will survey Isaiah's life and writings, and it will be well to divide the subject among the members of the class, using the subdivisions given below. Have all the class bring in favorite verses from Isaiah. Try to get the class to realize the beauty and majesty of Isaiah's prophecies, especially those relating to Christ. Do not spend much time discussing "the second Isaiah," though the arguments *pro* and *con* may be given briefly. Consider the characteristics of Isaiah and his work that should be imitated by Christians to-day.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Uzziah died (Beecher), B.C. 755. Sennacherib invaded Judah, B.C. 701. Isaiah died about B.C. 679, perhaps ninety years old.

**Place.** — Isaiah lived in Jerusalem, and his prophecies mainly concerned Jerusalem and Judah.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Literary characteristics of the book of Isaiah.
Isaiah's Messianic prophecies.
Isaiah as a statesman.
Passages in Isaiah oftenest quoted.
Christ's references to Isaiah.
Isaiah's rank among the prophets.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Isaiah's Work for His People.**

I. Isaiah's Call to Service, Isa. 1 : 1 ; 6 : 1–13.
The personal life of the prophet.
His summons and response.
Our readiness for God's work.

II. Isaiah's Work for His People, 2 Kings 18 : 13—20 : 19.
Isaiah's policy in national affairs.
The great deliverance from Sennacherib.
Isaiah the statesman.
Isaiah the inspired writer.
Isaiah the prophet.

## THE LESSON IN ART

Representations of Isaiah by Ciuffagni, Michelangelo, Bartolommeo, Holbein, Burne-Jones, Sargent.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Driver's *Isaiah, His Life and Times.* Mitchell's *Isaiah, Chapters 1–12.* Douglas's *Isaiah One and His Book One.* Kennedy's *Popular Argument for the Unity of Isaiah.* Cheyne's *The Prophecies of Isaiah.* Chapters on Isaiah in Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible, Men of the Old Testament* (by Townsend), Gordon's *Prophets of the Old Testament,* Whyte's *Bible Characters,* Wells's *Bible Miniatures,* Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible,* Dean Brown's *Five Young Men.* Commentaries on Isaiah by George Adam Smith (*Expositor's Bible*), Whitehouse (*New Century Bible*), Skinner (*Cambridge Bible*), Barnes (*Churchman's Bible*), Wade (*Westminster Commentaries*), Rawlinson (*Pulpit Commentary*), McFadyen (*Bible for Home and School*), Parker (*People's Bible*), Maclaren (*Expositions*), etc.

1. In the year that king Ŭz-zī′-ăh died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple.

**I. ISAIAH'S CALL TO SERVICE.** Isa. 6 : 1–8. The Personal Life of the Prophet. *Isaiah's Name* means the same as Joshua and Jesus, — "Jehovah saves." That was the life message of the prophet.

*His father* was Amoz (not to be confused with the prophet Amos).

Isaiah's Tree in the Kedron Valley.
Supposed to mark the site of Isaiah's martyrdom.

*His family* is thought to have been wealthy and of high rank. He certainly had constant access to the king. Tradition says that he was the cousin of King Uzziah. We know that he was married and had two sons.

*His life* was long, lasting through the whole or part of the reigns of five kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. It is the tradition that in the reign of Manasseh the aged prophet, refusing to obey the king's commands to join in idol-worship, was cruelly executed, being placed between two boards and sawn asunder — a fate probably referred to in Heb. 11 : 37.

*His place in history* is important. "After David, Isaiah is possibly the most conspicuous personage in the history of Israel." — *Dean Spence.*

Isaiah's Summons and Response. 1. **In the year that king Uzziah died.** For some reason that we do not know this chapter, relating the very beginning of Isaiah's life as a prophet, has been placed not at the opening of his book, as similar material is placed at the opening of the books of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, but following five chapters devoted to prophecies delivered later by

2. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4. And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

---

Isaiah. Uzziah was the powerful king of Judah whose impious act, the offering of incense in the temple, was punished by leprosy, so that he lived apart from others until his death. The death of this mighty monarch would be sure to cause many changes to which Isaiah looked forward with anxiety. It was a fit time to impress his mind with the overpowering majesty and supreme strength of the King of kings. **I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.** The prophets, though they spoke their own words, colored by their individual peculiarities and each in his own style, yet spoke as they were moved by God's Holy Spirit. This Spirit came upon at least the greatest of them, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, accompanied by a wonderful vision of the Most High which profoundly affected all their following life; see Ezek. 1:1; 2:1-3; Jer. 1:4-10. **And his train filled the temple.** "The scene is the heavenly palace of Jehovah's sovereignty, modelled upon, though not a copy of, the earthly temple at Jerusalem. The comparatively small chamber of the Temple on Zion is indefinitely expanded, the lofty throne takes the place of the mercy-seat, the skirts of the royal mantle, falling in ample folds, fill the space about and below the throne, and conceal from the prophet, as he seems to himself to be standing beneath, the Form seated upon it." — *Prof. S. R. Driver.*

2. **Above him stood the seraphim.** They were standing as servants and he was seated, and so they are said to stand "above him." This is the only passage in the Bible in which seraphs are represented as angels. Isaiah saw heavenly beings, in human form wholly or partly, serving as attendants upon the Divine Majesty. **Each one had six wings.** The three pairs of wings symbolized reverence, humility, and obedient service. **With twain he covered his face.** In reverence and awe, that he might not gaze upon the ineffable splendor of Deity. **And with twain he covered his feet.** This was to hide himself from the eyes of God. The Jewish commentary, the Targum, says: "With two he covered his face *that he night not see;* and with two he covered his body *that he might not be seen.*" **And with twain he did fly.** Speeding on the errands of Jehovah.

3. **And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts.** They *kept crying*, the meaning is. This is the trisagion, or anthem of the Three Holies, in which many see more than a hint of the doctrine of the Trinity. The thought of God's holiness — his perfect purity which calls forth the supreme adoration of impure mortality — had a profound influence over Isaiah and his matchless writings, giving the latter much of their power, and filling the prophet with a white-hot zeal for God's service. **The whole earth is full of his glory.** God's glory is the manifestation of his shining splendor in creation — in the natural world and in the hearts of God's faithful children. This conception also — the thought of the all-filling radiance of Deity — is one of the great factors in Isaiah's life and writings.

4. **And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried.** The voice was so mighty that it shook the very foundations on which the base of the temple doorway rested. **And the house was filled with smoke.** "The smoke symbolizes the 'dark side of Jehovah's self-manifestation' (Rev. 15:8), the reaction of his holy nature against sin. It answers to the rising consciousness of alienation and impurity in the prophet's mind, expressed in the next verse." — *Prof. J. Skinner, D.D.*

5. **Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone.** The outshining purity of God brought home to Isaiah's consciousness a sense of his own impurity. **Because I am a man of unclean lips.** Perhaps Isaiah wanted to join the seraphim's praises of Jehovah, but felt himself too unworthy. Perhaps he had longed to be a prophet of Jehovah, but the vision made clear to him that he was too sinful for that calling. He

6. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7. And he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.

8. And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.

---

was moved to expression, and now he perceived that he was unclean, the chief organ of expression and all. **And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.** "The prophet's own sin could not be compensated for by any merits on the part of his countrymen (compare Gen. 18 : 23–33), for such were lacking." — *G. W. Wade, D.D.* Moreover, Isaiah felt that he was, as it were, saturated with the wickedness of the people surrounding him. It is especially easy to catch up sins of the tongue and make them our own. **For mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.** "It was apparently a universal belief among the ancient Hebrews that the sight of God would be instant death to a man. Man cannot conceive God appearing to him for any other purpose than to execute judgment; so pure is God, so impure is man!" — *Hastings.*

6. **Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand.** "Read with the margin of the Revised Version 'hot stone,' like the glowing stones with which bread was baked (1 Kings 19 : 6)." — *Rev. Owen C. Whitehouse, D.D.* **Which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.** "The altar is, no doubt, an altar of incense, and of gold, not of stone; but the incense is burnt upon stones heated to a glow, and it is one of these which the angel takes with the golden tongs of the sanctuary (Ex. 25 : 38)." — *Rawlinson.*

7. **And he touched my mouth with it.** He touched Isaiah's mouth, rather than his hands or any other part of his body, because it was there that Isaiah felt that his iniquity centered. **And said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips.** It was a purifying rite in anticipation of Isaiah's life as a prophet. **And thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.** "Sacrament and lips, applied mercy and presented sin, now come together. In that Divine Presence Isaiah is his own altar; he acts his guilt in his own person, and so he feels the expiatory fire come to his very self directly from the heavenly hearth." — *George Adams Smith.* It was all a wonderful foreglimpse of what Christ has done for the sinner.

8. **And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send?** Isaiah knew perfectly well what errand God had in mind. His nation had lost its great king, and was without a leader worth the name. It had lost its ancient religion and was relying on empty forms. God sought for a man who would bring his people back to the one true Leader, the one safe and happy path. **And who will go for us?** The change from the singular of the preceding question to the plural in this question is a very clear indication of the great truth of the Trinity. **Then I said, Here am I; send me.** "It has ever been so along the Biblical line: when men have had an interview with God they have been prepared to risk anything and everything in his strength and grace. It is because we have not seen God that we do not serve him; it is because we have had no transporting, transforming vision that when we are asked to work in the church we tell lies, we grieve the Spirit with mocking excuses." — *Joseph Parker.*

Our Readiness for God's Work. "When war comes to any country, there are rich men who give money, millions of it, that the war chest may be full. But the only men who give what Lincoln called at Gettysburg 'the last full measure of devotion' are the men who give themselves. 'Here am I, send me' — nothing can take the place of that! In that sterner war where there is no discharge, in that age-long, world-wide fight against the evils of earth this same sound principle holds. Money is needed; counsel is needed; organization and administrative ability are needed. The bringing in of that kingdom which is not meat and drink, nor shot and shell, but righteousness and peace and joy in the divine Spirit, requires all these fine forms of effort. But nothing can ever take the place of that personal consecration of each man's own soul to the service of the living God." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

It is not ours to choose the form of service, but only to be ready for any task to which we are sent. The Holy Spirit, speaking in our hearts and through circumstances and through the advice of godly men and women, will direct as to our work. Isaiah did not first ask what his task should be; he said merely, "Send me."

II. **ISAIAH'S WORK FOR HIS PEOPLE**, 2 Kings 18:13—20:19.

Isaiah's Policy in National Affairs. "From the time that Isaiah began his prophetic ministry he was the adviser of the successive kings, conveying them messages from Jehovah, and, in some cases at least, inducing them to act on the advice which he offered. In 734 B.C., when Syria and Israel in alliance sought to capture Jerusalem, and put a creature of their own upon the throne, he declared Jehovah's purpose that the attempt should fail, and he vainly endeavored to persuade Ahaz to rely on Jehovah and not put confidence in heathen princes. Though the extreme peril into which Jerusalem was brought in Ahaz's reign was from the confederacy between Israel and Syria, the more permanent danger was from another quarter, namely, from Assyria, which was anxious to possess itself of Palestine, to open a way for the conquest of Egypt, which was its great rival. Isaiah's counsel was to avoid entangling alliances with any of the Gentile nations, and simply to trust in Jehovah. Ahaz unwisely rejected this advice, called in Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, and became his vassal. Under Hezekiah the prophet's counsel was treated with more respect." — *Davis's Bible Dictionary.*

Isaiah. Sargent.
From the "Frieze of the Prophets."

The Great Deliverance from Sennacherib. The climax of Isaiah's life was the deliverance from Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Hezekiah (or, more likely, his nobles acting for him when he was sick) had committed Judah to an alliance with Egypt, Philistia, and Babylon against the Assyrian monarch, who had just come to the throne. Sennacherib reconquered Babylonia and with a tremendous army marched down from the north upon Judah, winning victories as he came. Hezekiah, terror-stricken, bought him off with an immense tribute, to pay which he emptied all the royal treasuries and even stripped the gold off the doors and posts of the temple. Having received this treasure, however, Sennacherib was false to his treaty and made renewed demands for the surrender of the city. Strengthened by Isaiah, and praying fervently to Jehovah, Hezekiah refused these demands. Isaiah foretold the mysterious discomfiture of the Assyrian besiegers, and this happened immediately. They were seized by a panic such as often laid hold on the vast, undisciplined, and superstitious Eastern armies. They fled precipitantly, and Jerusalem was saved.

> "And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
> And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
> And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
> Hath melted like snow at the glance of the Lord!" — *Byron.*

Isaiah the Statesman. "He pleaded with his people, wooed them, wept over them, entreated them to turn to the Lord and serve him; painting in roseate hues the blessedness and security of a godly nation. He sought no office, he was not partisan, he knew no political sect, and he knew no courtier-like airs or favorite manners. He was a voice and a power above parties or politics; he understood nothing of expediency or compromise; he stood for naked truth, and sheer severity of righteousness, pointing out that this alone is a tried and sure rock of permanent prosperity. In the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, he stood as an incarnate conscience, testifying for God and for his covenant of eternal truth. What he endured in carrying on his prolonged battle with every form of evil cannot be adequately imagined. He was a polished and high-bred gentleman, versed in various learning, and familiar with the affairs of state. He was a man of keen susceptibility, quick to feel a wrong, or to suffer under neglect, ridicule, and reproach. But he never quailed under opposition, nor wavered in persecution." — *Rev. W. J. Townsend, D.D.*

Isaiah the Inspired Writer. "There is a unique majesty in Isaiah's tones — the majesty of one haunted by the vision of the divine holiness. The sweep of his imagination is sublime, and the diction is as lordly as the thought. The phrasing is carefully finished, and the verse moves on with a stately rhythm, strong, full, yet always under command. With the same royal ease the young prophet can wield the weapons of satire, as when he pictures the pride of the 'daughters of Jerusalem,' who hold themselves so haughtily,

> And walk with outstretched neck,
> And ogling with their eyes;
> Mincing ever as they walk,
> And jingling with their feet,

only to have their perfume turned to rottenness and their girdle exchanged for a rope, their well-dressed hair made baldness and their stately robes replaced by sackcloth. But his loftiest scorn is reserved for the careless rich who devour the needy, the landgrabbers and the topers, the moral perverts and the scoffing. At times the prophet's anger melts into a tenderness like that of Hosea." — *Prof. Alexander R. Gordon.*

"For versatility of expression and brilliancy of imagery Isaiah had no superior, not even a rival. His style marks the climax of Hebrew literary art. Both his periods and descriptions are most finished and sublime. He is a perfect artist in words. Beauty and strength are characteristic of his entire book. Epigrams and metaphors, particularly of flood, storm, and sound, interrogation and dialogue, antithesis and alliteration, hyperbole and parable, even paranomasia or play upon words, characterize Isaiah's book as the great masterpiece of Hebrew literature. He is also famous for his richness of vocabulary and synonyms. For example, Ezekiel uses 1,535 words; Jeremiah, 1,653; the Psalmists, 2,170; while Isaiah uses 2,186. Isaiah was also an orator: Jerome likened him to Demosthenes; and a poet: he frequently elaborates his messages in rhythmic or poetic style. As Driver observes, 'Isaiah's poetic genius is superb.'" — *Prof. George L. Robinson.*

"Coleridge called Isaiah his ideal of the Hebrew prophet. He studied that part of Scripture 'with unremitting attention and most reverential admiration.' He could repeat a good deal of Isaiah by heart, and he delighted in pointing out the hexametrical rhythm of numerous passages in the English version.

"Sara Coleridge shared her father's admiration for this prophet. 'I believe,' she wrote, 'that Isaiah and Ezekiel sought to excel as poets, all the more that their poetry was the vehicle of divine truth, of truth awakened in their souls by inspiration.'" — *Jane T. Stoddart.*

The Question of a Second Isaiah is much debated. Many scholars regard the last twenty-seven chapters of the book, together with several preceding passages, as having been written by one or more unknown prophets at the time of the exile. This is because the language is regarded as late and the style as peculiar; various points in the descriptive material seem to fit the time of the exile; Cyrus is mentioned by name. In reply the conservative scholars hold that no single word of late date has been found in these suspected chapters; that most great authors change their style if they write through long periods; that if predictive prophecy is granted as possible it would account for all in Isaiah's writings that came to pass in the exile; that all ancient opinion agrees in ascribing the whole book to Isaiah; that the closing portion of Isaiah contains most striking and intimate points of likeness to the rest of the book; that it is impossible that a prophet so great as the supposed second Isaiah could have lived and written and yet remained unknown to history. Of course, even if the second Isaiah did exist, the most wonderful prophecies of Christ, of which he would be the writer, were set down five centuries before the birth of Christ.

Isaiah the Prophet. The climax of Isaiah's writings is his prophecies of the Messiah, especially the wonderful picture of the Suffering Servant, Isa. 52 : 13 — 53 : 12, which is the crown of all Messianic prophecies, fittingly called by Polycarp "the golden passional of the Old Testament." The complete fulfilment of all these prophecies in the life and death of Jesus Christ and in the growth of his church since his resurrection furnishes one of the chief arguments for the truth of Christianity. Isa. 61 : 1, 2 was quoted by Christ at the outset of his ministry (Luke 4 : 17–21) as applying to himself and describing his work. "Isaiah's ideal, his Christ, is a lover of man, a lover of the unloveliest man. His ideal was a ministrant Man, a Man who should save to the uttermost." — *George Matheson.* In his glorious writings we see the Saviour as in a flawless mirror.

## LESSON X. — June 3.

## JEREMIAH, THE PROPHET OF COURAGE. — Jeremiah 1 : 1–10; 7 : 1–15; 20 : 1–6; 21 : 26; 32; 35 : 1–19; 36; 37 : 11–28; 39 : 11, 12; 42 : 1–11; 43 : 4–10.

(A Survey of Jeremiah's Life.)

(May Be Used with Temperance Applications.)

**PRINT Jer. 35 : 5–14, 18, 19.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.* — 1 Cor. 16 : 13.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 94 : 16–23.
**Reference Material** : Jer. 9 : 1–9; 13 : 1–9; 16 : 1–4; 17 : 19–27; 19 : 1–10; 22 : 13–19; 31 : 15, 31–34; Matt. 2 : 17, 18; 16 : 14.
**Primary Topic** : Sons Who Honored Their Father.
**Lesson Material** : Jer. 35 : 5–14, 18, 19.
**Memory Verse** : Children, obey your parents. Eph. 6 : 1.
**Junior Topic** : The Story of the Rechabites.
**Lesson Material** : Jer. 35 : 5–14, 18, 19.
**Memory Verse** : Jer. 35 : 6.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Jeremiah, the Courageous Prophet.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Jeremiah's Service to His Nation.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary and Junior** pupils will study the single episode of the Rechabites, drawing from it the lessons of honoring and obeying parents, holding to a fine purpose, and having nothing to do with intoxicating liquor. The scene may be made very vivid by constructing from pasteboard a little building of two or three stories full of chambers, and putting in one room of the second story a lot of colored wooden pegs to represent men.

Grotto of Jeremiah.

**The Older Classes** will review the story of Jeremiah's courageous battle with heathenism and national degeneracy. Make a list of the main events and place it before the class on a blackboard or a large sheet of paper. Different pupils, previously assigned to the task, will relate each event. Then consider the book of Jeremiah, its outline and style. Get the members of the class to read as much of the book as they can during the week and bring to the class the verses that each considers most beautiful and striking.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Jeremiah began prophesying (Beecher) B.C. 626. Jehoiakim came to the throne B.C. 607, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar in B.C. 603, and the special event of our lesson occurred in B.C. 600, when Nebuchadnezzar was subduing the country. Baruch's reading of Jeremiah's prophecy occurred B.C. 603. Jeremiah's land purchase was B.C. 587. During these years Solon was lawmaker at Athens.

**Place.** — Jeremiah's prophetic work was done at Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The problem before Jeremiah.
The message of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah's manner of preaching.
Jeremiah's style of writing.
Jeremiah's enemies.
Jeremiah's teachings for to-day.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Jeremiah, the Courageous Prophet.**

I. THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH.
- His training.
- His call.
- His preaching.
- His enemies and imprisonments.
- His death.

II. THE WRITINGS OF JEREMIAH.
- Outline of the book.
- Style of the book.
- The book of Lamentations.

III. A SPECIMEN DEED OF JEREMIAH, Jer. 35 : 1–19.
- The Rechabites tested.
- The Rechabites faithful.
- The unfaithful people.
- Temperance applications.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Representations of Jeremiah by Michelangelo (Sistine Chapel), Allston (Yale Art Museum), Burne-Jones.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

On Jeremiah see Cheyne's *Jeremiah, His Life and Times* (*Men of the Bible* series), Meyer's *Jeremiah, Priest and Prophet*, Fairweather's *The Pre-exilic Prophets* (in *Temple Series of Bible Characters*), Adeney in *Men of the Old Testament*, Greenhough's *Half-Hours in God's Older Picture Gallery*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*, Gordon's *Prophets of the Old Testament*, Spence in *Book by Book*, Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Eiselen's *Prophecy and the Prophets*, Francis E. Clark's *Old Lanterns for Present Paths*. *Commentaries:* Cheyne in *The Pulpit Commentary*, Streane in *The Cambridge Bible*, Peake in *The New Century Bible*, Parker's *People's Bible*, Ball and Bennett in *The Expositor's Bible*, Driver's *Jeremiah*.

I. **THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH**. *The Name*, Jeremiah, means "Jehovah establishes" or "Jehovah hurls." The Greek form is Jeremias, and the word is sometimes contracted in English to Jeremy.

*His Father* was Hilkiah, a priest, who may (though it is doubtful) have been the Hilkiah who was high priest in the time of Josiah and who discovered the copy of the Law in the temple. Jeremiah's uncle, Shallum, was the husband of Huldah the prophetess (though some hold that this was another Shallum).

Jeremiah. Michelangelo.

*His Boyhood Home* was Anathoth (now Anata), a town in the territory of Benjamin about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. He spent most of his life, however, in Jerusalem.

*His Training* must have been thorough. "He appears to have lived in easy circumstances (Jer. 32 : 6 ff.), and to have been carefully educated in all the sacred lore of Israel. He expressly acknowledges how much he owed to his parents (Jer. 1 : 5). From Jer. 16 : 2 it may be concluded that he was never married." — *Fairweather*. We are not told that Jeremiah received any training in the schools of the prophets ; his education was probably given him at home and by the priests who made Anathoth their residence.

THE CALL OF JEREMIAH. The Northern Kingdom had been conquered and its people taken into exile because of their disobedience to God. Clear-eyed Jews saw the same fate threatening the Southern Kingdom. Hezekiah and Isaiah had not been able to lift the people permanently above their cruel and lustful heathenism. The work of the good king Josiah did not really touch their hearts. The people were far gone in the iniquities of idolatry, and these evils had their seat now in Jerusalem, the Holy City.

The call to testify for God against this wickedness came to Jeremiah in his youth and obscurity. He was not only young, but timid and shrinking. "Ah, Lord

God," he exclaimed in dismay, " I cannot speak : for I am a child." But the Lord bade him not to fear, for he would be with him ; and he touched the young man's mouth, and gave him an eloquence such as the world has rarely known.

THE PREACHING OF JEREMIAH. Jeremiah's prophetic activities extended from the last years of Josiah's reign to and beyond the final capture of Jerusalem and the exile of the people. He was constantly opposed. Even under Josiah the men of Anathoth sought to kill him, and he was continually reproached and derided because he foretold disaster. Jeremiah is called " the weeping prophet," but he had good reason to weep, for he saw his beloved city and nation hastening to ruin.

During the reign of Jehoiakim the position of Jeremiah became increasingly difficult. He was opposed sharply to the royal policies, to the king's self-glorification, his oppression of the people, his neglect of the worship of Jehovah. Jeremiah exasperated the priests and the false prophets by his insistence upon true religion. They charged him before the court with disloyalty, but they could not obtain a conviction.

Jeremiah opposed the alliance with Egypt which was so popular, insisting that Babylon was sure to triumph and that it was folly to withstand her. This insistence brought Jeremiah into disrepute, and seems even to have caused his imprisonment for a time. Then came the actual inroad of Nebuchadnezzar, confirming Jeremiah's prophecies, and in connection with that inroad Jeremiah taught the lesson through the Rechabites that is our special study this week.

Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to withdraw his army, probably to return home and ascend the throne on the death of his father. The Jews did not heed the warning he had given, and this was the time when Jeremiah felt moved to dictate to Baruch a stern prophecy which was read to the crowd in the temple on a solemn feast day. The king sent for the roll, cut it to pieces and burned it ; whereupon Jeremiah calmly dictated the same prophecies again and added a rebuke to the king for his impiety.

After this bold defiance Jeremiah remained prudently in hiding ; perhaps it was at this time that he acted out the symbol of the linen girdle, taking it to the Euphrates and hiding it in a hole in the rock, then going back and finding it all decayed and ruined. The meaning of the symbol was that the Jews were safe from ruin only as they clung close to God, as a girdle clings close to the body.

Following the horrible end of Jehoiakim in a battle with some of the allies of Babylon, and the brief and disastrous reign of Jehoiachin, came the reign of Zedekiah which ended in the fall of Jerusalem and the exile. Zedekiah was inclined to listen to Jeremiah's teaching that Judah should save itself by yielding to Babylon, but he was a weak ruler and could do nothing against Jeremiah's many enemies among the princes and nobles. The Chaldeans came once more against Judah but were drawn off to meet an army from Egypt. Jeremiah took this opportunity to go to Anathoth to get possession of a piece of land belonging to him, when his enemies pretended that he was running away to the Chaldeans and had him imprisoned as a deserter. After many days Zedekiah freed him, but again his enemies procured his imprisonment, this time in a horrible muddy cistern, from which finally he was freed by a noble-minded Ethiopian eunuch.

Then came the terrible siege, the blinding and exile of Zedekiah, the burning of the temple, the sacking of Jerusalem. The Chaldean conquerors treated Jeremiah mildly, and he had a fair measure of liberty. Many of the Jews were for fleeing to Egypt, but Jeremiah opposed them strenuously. They compelled Jeremiah to go with them, and the last we hear of him he was at Tahpanhes, a town near the northeast border of Egypt. This last utterance was still one more protest against Jewish idolatry. The tradition is that the Jews in Egypt, provoked by Jeremiah's rebukes, stoned the faithful prophet to death. Thus ended a life of rare fidelity to the truth of God and splendid courage in the face of enormous obstacles. Jeremiah is one of the most heroic figures of all time.

II. **THE WRITINGS OF JEREMIAH**. The book of Jeremiah is in large part written in chronological order, though some prophecies are grouped according to their subject and not in the order of time. Professor A. B. Davidson divides the book into five sections : prophecies of the reign of Josiah (chapters 1–6), of Jehoiakim (7–20), of Zedekiah (21–38), events after the fall of Jerusalem (39–45), prophecies against foreign nations and historical conclusion (46–51).

Jeremiah's style (Streane) is marked by (1) absence of ornament, a sad and pain-filled simplicity, fitting his themes ; (2) frequent repetition, to be expected where

the writer is constantly emphasizing one message ; (3) frequent correspondences of language and thought with the earlier prophets and the book of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah thus answering his enemies by showing the identity of his message with the messages of those whom they nominally revered ; (4) the use of many illustrations, similes, parables, these being often acted out by the prophet.

" Jeremiah's style, however it may form a contrast with that of Isaiah and others, is yet truly poetical." — *Streane.*

" If we compare Jeremiah's land with the fruitful Carmel and cedar-forest of Isaiah, it is a waste, but a poetic waste, and a true image of the melancholy state of things which lay before his eyes. He is certainly the greatest poet of desolation and sorrow, because he most deeply feels them." — *Umbreit.*

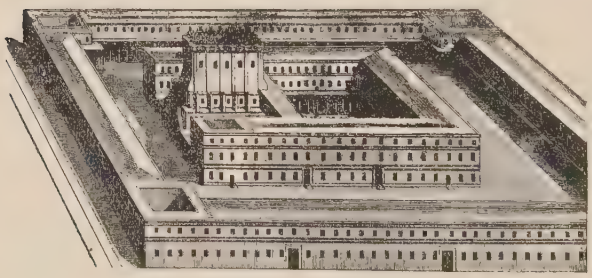
" The writings of Jeremiah are characterized by great ideas rather than by literary excellence. Although frequently powerful and searching, and not without a certain charm, the style is on the whole diffuse and unadorned. There is no attempt at artistic word-painting." — *Fairweather.*

" How could he soar, when there was so much to depress his imagination ? He at any rate can touch the heart, and is free from affectation. His greatest poem is his own fascinating character." — *Cheyne.*

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS consists of five poems, mainly alphabetical, each verse or group of verses beginning with one of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The poems are very beautiful elegies, picturing and lamenting the ruin of Jerusalem. The poems are full of the spirit of Jeremiah. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, states that these poems are by Jeremiah, the Latin translation by Jerome (the Vulgate) repeats the statement ; Josephus and the Talmud confirm it ; but the most important authority of all, the original Hebrew, names no author of the book. The style of the poems is entirely different from anything in the book of Jeremiah, and scholars in general consider that Lamentations was not written by him but by some poet or group of poets full of his thoughts and contemporary with the fall of Jerusalem.

III. **A SPECIMEN DEED OF JEREMIAH**, Jer. 35 : 1–19. The Rechabites " were a wandering tribe of Kenite descent and thus connected with Moses' father-in-law (Judges 1 : 16). Some of that family had settled in the south of Judah (Judges 1 : 16), others near Kedesh in Naphtali (Judges 4 : 11). This branch, however, as we see, were nomadic." — *Cambridge Bible.* Concerning this tribe Jeremiah had a message from the Lord.

The Rechabites were in Jerusalem at the time — a very unusual occurrence, probably unique — driven there for shelter by the Babylonian army which was ravaging the land. Anything concerning these strangers would make a deep impression upon the people of Jerusalem, and it was through them that Jeremiah was told to preach one of his acted parables.



Solomon's Temple According to F. Lamy.

The first step was to usher the Rechabites into one of the chambers of the temple. These chambers were in the courts which surrounded the sacred edifice, and rose in several tiers. Some of them were used as store-rooms (1 Chron. 28 : 12) and others as meeting-places for the temple officers and other workers. The chamber chosen was at least in the second story, a room that seems to have been used for instruction by a teacher or prophet named Hanan, who was probably in sympathy with Jeremiah. The chamber of the princes was next to it and the chamber of one of the three temple doorkeepers was below it.

Doubtless Jeremiah paraded the rough and manly strangers through the streets of Jerusalem with some formality. The unusual procession would draw a curious crowd that would follow up the temple hill, and stare into the chamber to see what would happen.

5. And I set before the sons of the house of the Rē′-ĸhăb-ītes bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6. But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jŏn′-ă-dăb the son of Rē′-ĸhăb, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever:

7. Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn.

5. **And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups.** The wine was in the large bowls, from which it was dipped into the smaller drinking cups. Jeremiah, of course, would never have offered wine to the Rechabites if he had not been directed by the Lord to do so. **And I said unto them, Drink ye wine.** "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink!" exclaimed Habakkuk (Hab. 2 : 15). Jeremiah, however, did not incur this woe, because he was merely giving the Rechabites an opportunity, which he was sure they would seize, to show their principles by refusing the wine.

6. **But they said, We will drink no wine.** It was a real temptation which they resisted. They saw all the people of Jerusalem drinking freely. They were crude, wandering folks, set down by chance in the midst of a great city. It is always a temptation to "do in Rome as the Romans do," and an especial temptation to follow the example of those that seem more cultured and elegant than we are. Double honor, then, to these manly men for their valiant No! **For Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us.** Note that these people were not called Jonadabites, but were named from Jonadab's father. "Father" means ancestor, for Jonadab lived nearly three centuries before this time; yet through all those decades his descendants had obeyed his word. This Jonadab was a stanch character who helped Jehu (2 Kings 10 : 15–28) to overthrow the iniquitous worship of Baal. **Saying, Ye shall drink no wine.** This was the law also of the Nazirite (Num. 6 : 3, 4), and for the same reason, namely, that wine weakened body and mind and destroyed the soul. There was to be no "moderate drinking" : it was *no* wine. **Neither ye, nor your sons, for ever.** If a thing is good for the father, it is good for the son; if it is good for one generation, it is good for all generations. Fathers should remember that not only in the matter of drinking, but in the use of tobacco, in swearing, and in all other bad habits, what they do not want their sons to do they must not do themselves.

7. **Neither shall ye build house.** Jonadab saw the evils of city life, with its many temptations to luxury, sloth, extravagance, and vice, and he wished to preserve his descendants from these snares. To-day the tendency cityward has become so strong that fully half the populace of the United States is in the cities and towns, leaving the healthful, beautiful, and independent farm life scantily manned. **Nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard.** Jonadab knew that vineyards meant wine. They were to keep themselves from temptation. More than that, they were not to raise the grapes from which others might make wine.

*Illustration.* Thus, in Scott's *Legend of Montrose* (Chapter 22), the dying Highlander, Ranald of the Mist, addresses his heir : "Son of the Mist! be free as thy forefathers. Own no lord — receive no law — take no hire — give no stipend — build no hut — enclose no pasture — sow no grain."

**Nor have any.** They were not only not to till vineyards but they should not own vineyards for others to till. The man who owns a saloon may not drink a drop of liquor himself, but he is worse than a drunkard because he allows his property to be used to make others drunk. **But all your days ye shall dwell in tents.** The tent life was healthful; besides, it was free and independent.

> "Not for you the life
> Of sloth and ease within the city's gates,
> Where idol-feasts are held, and incense smokes
> To Baalim and Ashtaroth; where man
> Loses his manhood, and the scoffers sit
> Perverting judgment, selfish, soft, impure." — *Plumptre.*

**That ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn.** Jonadab knew that such a life of temperance, frugality, fresh air, simplicity, and obedience to God as he

8. And we have obeyed the voice of Jŏn′-ă-dăb the son of Rē′-chăb, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters;

9. Nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10. But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jŏn′-ă-dăb our father commanded us.

11. But it came to pass, when Nĕb-ū-chăd-rĕz′-zär king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chăl-dē′-ăns, and for fear of the army of the Sȳr′-ĭ-ăns; so we dwell at Jerusalem.

12. Then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah, saying,

13. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith Jehovah.

---

prescribed would virtually do away with most diseases and would enormously lengthen life. It would do so to-day, especially if begun in early youth.

8. **And we have obeyed . . . in all that he charged us.** "Not only are the Rechabites there, but their fathers are with them in spirit. A man should never be left alone; all his best antecedents should be round about him, voices cheering him in right ways." — *Joseph Parker.* **To drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters.** It is never enough to obey God ourselves; we are responsible also for the obedience of all whom we can influence, especially those that are closest to us in our homes.

9. **Nor to build houses,** etc. "The Rechabites were, in fact, typical Arabs. The Wahhabee movement, in the nineteenth century, may be taken as partly parallel, though, of course, a settled life is not one of the abominations of the neo-orthodox Islam. A still more complete parallel is given by Diodorus Siculus (XIX. 94) who states it to be the law of the Nabatæans 'neither to sow corn, nor to plant any fruit-bearing herb, nor to drink wine, nor to prepare houses,' and gives as the motive of this the preservation of their independence." — *Prof. T. K. Cheyne.*

10. **But we have dwelt in tents,** etc. We need not suppose that the Rechabites had abandoned their ancient custom even under the temporary emergency, for they might have pitched their tents within the walls of Jerusalem, and probably did.

11. **But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land.** Nebuchadrezzar is another form of Nebuchadnezzar, the second king of Babylon of that name, and the most prominent and important heathen king mentioned in the Bible. He invaded Palestine because King Jehoiakim had rashly rebelled against him. **That we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem.** They would still observe the spirit of Jonadab's command, while obliged to disregard the letter of it. **For fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians.** The Chaldeans had given their name to the whole of Babylonia, and the Chaldean army was the Babylonian forces of Nebuchadnezzar. They were aided, as we learn also from 2 Kings 24 : 2, by bands from Syria to the north of Palestine.

12. **Then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah.** Perhaps the prophet had not known, up to this point, just why he was testing the Rechabites. In a flash of inspiration he was made to understand the meaning of the event and what use he was to make of it.

13. **Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel.** This majestic title, referring to God as the Lord of armies, would remind Jeremiah's hearers of the power of God used so often to drive back their foes and preserve his people from harm. **Go, and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.** Of course Jeremiah addressed only a few of them, speaking perhaps from the door of the chamber to the crowd that had collected, or perhaps addressing the people in the court below. But the word would soon be passed around, for in those days human speech made a very effective substitute for newspapers. **Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith Jehovah.** "They, too, had the same promise that by obeying they

14. The words of Jŏn′-ă-dăb the son of Rē′-ċhăb, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; and unto this day they drink none, for they obey their father's commandment. But I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not hearkened unto me.

18. And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rē′-ċhăb-ītes, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jŏn′-ă-dăb your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he commanded you;

19. Therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Jŏn′-ă-dăb the son of Rē′-ċhăb shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

---

should dwell in the land which God had given them, but they had turned a deaf ear both to the promise and the warning which it implied." — *Ellicott.*

14. **The words of Jonadab . . . are performed.** Of course it was easier for the Rechabites to live the free life of the desert than for the Jews to keep all the searching requirements of the Mosaic law. Jeremiah is not setting up the faithful Rechabite above the faithful Jew, but only above the disobedient Jew.

**But I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking.** "The divine King and Father of Israel had been untiring in his instruction and admonitions." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett.* **And ye have not hearkened unto me.** God had enforced his commands (v. 15) by the written words of the Law and the earnest admonitions of the prophets, the teachings of the Levites and the symbolic sacrifices of the priests. None of these appeals were used to enforce Jonadab's instruction, yet he was heeded, and the loving, faithful God was scornfully disobeyed! It was a stern but deserved rebuke, and it was emphasized (vs. 16, 17) by the prophecy of terrible woes to come upon the nation as punishment.

18. **And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites.** That is, the members of that family there before him. **Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel.** The same title of Jehovah that Jeremiah had used for warning he now used for blessing. **Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father,** etc. God will not leave any obedience unrewarded; he is glad of any excuse for bestowing kindness.

19. **Therefore . . . Jonadab . . . shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.** To "stand before" Jehovah means to minister to him, as kings are seated while their servants and officers stand in their presence. This is a remarkable promise. It had been spoken in ancient days of the Levites (Deut. 10 : 8; 18 : 5, 7), of a patriarch (Gen. 19 : 27), of the priests (1 Kings 8 : 11; 2 Chron. 29 : 11; Neh. 7 : 65), of a prophet (1 Kings 18 : 15), of the priests and Levites together (Ps. 134 : 1; 135 : 2). Thus the Lord through Jeremiah ranked the faithful Rechabites with his most honored servants among the Hebrews, his chosen people, and promised them a perpetual existence as recognized servants of the Most High.

*Illustration.* "The travellers, Dr. Wolff (1829 and 1839) and Signor Pierotti (1862), report that they have met tribes near Mecca, on the Dead Sea, or in Yemen and Senaar, who observed the rule of Jonadab, claimed to be his descendants, referred to Jer. 35 : 19 as fulfilled in them, and led the life of devout Jews." — *Ellicott.*

TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS. Jeremiah's placing of wine before the Rechabites at God's command is analogous to the act of prohibition agents when, in order to get evidence against the illegal sellers of liquor, they enter their foul dens and order a drink. It is the only way to convict them under the law.

The only permanent way to make the world temperate is to implant a hatred for intoxicants in every human breast; but we make it far easier for Rechabite principles to grow and for Rechabites to stand firm if we remove, as America has done, the temptation of the saloon.

It has been common to sneer at the temperance pledge as a weak and foolish thing, but it has saved millions for manliness, as it saved the Rechabites. Whatever is worth doing is worth promising to do, and whatever we should refrain from doing we should be glad to agree not to do.

Jonadab was willing to be peculiar and to make his descendants peculiar, because thereby he knew that he and they would be peculiarly strong, wise, and noble. Fashion is a miserable, worthless thing alongside of righteousness.

Temperance in one thing should be reënforced by temperance in all things. It was not enough for the Rechabites to refrain from wine-drinking; they also refrained from all enervating luxuries. Let us follow their good example, in the spirit of it, by living simple, manly lives, free from extravagance and sloth. The true temperance is inclusive, widening out to cover the entire life.

## LESSON XI. — June 10.

## NEHEMIAH, THE BOLD BUILDER. — Nehemiah, chapters 1 and 2; 4—6; 8:9–12; 12:31—13:31.

(A Survey of Nehemiah's Life.)

**PRINT Neh. 4:6–15.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord.* — NEH. 4:14.

**Devotional Reading**: Ps. 46:1–7.
**Primary Topic**: A MAN WHO WAS NOT AFRAID.
**Lesson Material**: Neh. 4:6–20. Print Neh. 4:6–15.
**Memory Verse**: If God is for us, who is against us? Rom. 8:31.
**Junior Topic**: HOW NEHEMIAH BUILT THE WALL.
**Lesson Material**: Neh. 2:1–16; 4:1–23. Print Neh. 4:6–15.
**Memory Verse**: Ps. 27:1.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: HOW NEHEMIAH GOT THINGS DONE.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: NEHEMIAH, AN EXAMPLE FOR MEN OF AFFAIRS.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will emphasize the courage of Nehemiah, confining the lesson to the wall-building and the enemies that opposed it. Make a little model of the walls of Jerusalem, using blocks or pasteboard, and putting wooden cubes inside for houses. Set the pupils to thinking of their own tasks — at home, in school, in church — and the enemies that try to stop them, such as Laziness, Put-off, Fear. These can be conquered by prayer and trust in God, the same weapons that Nehemiah used.

**The Older Classes** will review the entire career of Nehemiah. Get them, if you can, to read all his book during the week. Divide up his life among them according to the subheads given below, and let each report on a section. Ask each, as he reports, to tell what lesson he learns about the best way for us to get things done. Set before the class at the close, in tabular form on the blackboard or a large sheet of paper, the qualities that made Nehemiah a model man of business.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Nehemiah began his work in Jerusalem (Beecher) and rebuilt the wall B.C. 444, the year when Pericles became supreme in Athens. Thucydides was then living and the Parthenon was in course of erection. His first administration closed B.C. 433, afterwards returning for a second administration.

**Place.** — Susa, the capital of Persia. Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Nehemiah's task and ours.
Nehemiah's enemies and ours.
Nehemiah's equipment for his task.
Nehemiah as an example for reformers.
Nehemiah as an example for men of affairs.
The characteristics of Nehemiah's writings.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The Character and Work of Nehemiah.**

I. HOW NEHEMIAH ENTERED ON HIS WORK, Neh. 1, 2.
- Sad news from Jerusalem.
- The faith-filled prayer.
- The bold request.
- Viewing the ruins.
- Inspiring the Jews.

II. HOW NEHEMIAH BUILT THE WALL, Neh. 4, 6.
- Attack by ridicule.
- Attack by threats.
- Attack by treachery.
- Attack by slander.
- Enemies within the walls.
- "So the wall was finished."

III. HOW NEHEMIAH STOOD FOR THE RIGHT, Neh. 5; 8:9–12; 12:31—13:31.

Condemning usury.
Honoring the law of God.
Praising Jehovah.
Cleansing the temple.
Providing for the temple.
Preserving the Sabbath.
Forbidding heathen wives.
Nehemiahs needed to-day.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Rawlinson's *Ezra and Nehemiah.* Milligan in *Men of the Old Testament.* Nicoll's *Sunday Evening.* Morrison's *The Wind on the Heath* and *The Footsteps of the Flock.* Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament.* Whyte's *Bible Characters* (Sanballat and Nehemiah). Geikie's *Landmarks of Old Testament History* and *Old Testament Characters.* Wells's *Bible Miniatures.* Stowell's *Nehemiah, a Model for Men of Business.* Robertson in *Book by Book. The Cambridge Bible* (Bishop Ryle), *New Century Bible* (Professor Davies), *Pulpit Commentary* (Rawlinson), *International Critical Commentary* (Professor Batten).

**I. HOW NEHEMIAH ENTERED ON HIS WORK**, Neh. 1, 2. SAD NEWS FROM JERUSALEM. *The name Nehemiah* means "Comforted of Jehovah" or "Jehovah consoles."

*His father* was Hacaliah, about whom we know nothing except that so excellent a son argues a good father and mother. One of his brothers was named Hanani, who had been made a ruler of Jerusalem, and who therefore was a man of executive ability and probaby of fine character.

*His education* is shown by his writings to have emphasized devotion to God's law and to have inculcated patriotic fervor, besides developing great practical ability. "From the fact that Nehemiah was so grieved at the desolation of the city and sepulchers of his fathers and that he was so jealous for the laws of the God of Judah, we can justly infer that he was brought up by pious parents, who instructed him in the history and law of the Jewish people." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.*

*Nehemiah's position* as cupbearer to Artaxerxes king of Persia implies that he was a man of fine character and ability, for it was his duty to serve wine at the king's table. "On account of the constant fear of plots and intrigues, a person must be regarded as thoroughly trustworthy to hold this position. He must guard against poison in the king's cup, and was sometimes required to swallow some of the wine before serving it. His confidential relations with the king often endeared him to his sovereign and also gave him a position of great influence. Nehemiah's financial ability (Neh. 5:8, 10, 14, 17) would indicate that the office was a lucrative one." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.*

SAD NEWS FROM JERUSALEM. Nehemiah was in Shushan (Susa), the capital of the Persian Empire, when he had a visit from his brother Hanani who had returned from Jerusalem. From him, in answer to his eager questions, Nehemiah learned that the Holy City was in a sad plight, its walls broken down leaving the city open to any marauder, its gates burned, its inhabitants "in great affliction and reproach." After Ezra's expedition Nehemiah had expected better news. Zerubbabel had succeeded in rebuilding the temple. Probably the Samaritans and their allies had interfered with Ezra's attempt to rebuild the walls. At any rate, Hanani must have reported some recent calamity, and not the fall of Jerusalem nearly a century and a half before, with which of course Nehemiah was perfectly familiar.

THE FAITH-FILLED PRAYER. Nehemiah, ardent patriot as he was, was plunged into the deepest grief, a sorrow that lasted for four long months during which he did not see the king. "Persian kings had several cupbearers, who probably discharged their office each in his turn, like maids of honor at the British court. Nehemiah may have been, practically, out of office when he received the sad intelligence of Jerusalem's depressed condition from Hanani, and may not have been called upon to resume his duties till the fourth month afterwards. Or the king may have been absent from Susa during this interval, passing the winter at one of the other royal residences, probably Babylon, while Nehemiah remained at Susa." — *Rawlinson.* During these four months Nehemiah was constantly praying, and the good fortune that attended him was, he was convinced, God's answer to his fervent and trusting petitions.

THE BOLD REQUEST. When Artaxerxes returned and Nehemiah resumed his duties, it was with a sad face which the king immediately noticed, asking the reason. Instantly Nehemiah was filled with alarm, for every one must have a happy countenance in the presence of an Eastern monarch, or suffer severe punishment. But Artaxerxes was kind to his favorite officer, and listened while Nehemiah, praying swiftly to Jehovah, told him of the evil plight of Jerusalem, and made the bold request that he, a mere palace underling, should be sent to Palestine as its governor. This request was readily granted, for Artaxerxes was doubtless glad to have his dis-

tant frontier strengthened with fortifications, and to place in control a man so capable and trusty as Nehemiah. Therefore he armed Nehemiah with letters to the governors of neighboring provinces who might dispute his authority, and also with an order on the royal forests for whatever timber he might need for rebuilding the wall and the gates. Nehemiah's prayers were abundantly answered.

Viewing the Ruins. The king sent an armed escort with Nehemiah, who must have travelled by way of Babylon, Hamath, and Damascus, thence south through Palestine, possibly making the unpleasant acquaintance of Sanballat and Tobiah as he traversed Samaria. Arrived at Jerusalem, Nehemiah did a wise and characteristic thing: he waited three days before making a reconnoissance of the ruined wall which he came to restore. He did not wish to announce his plans until he had

Nehemiah before the King. From an old print.

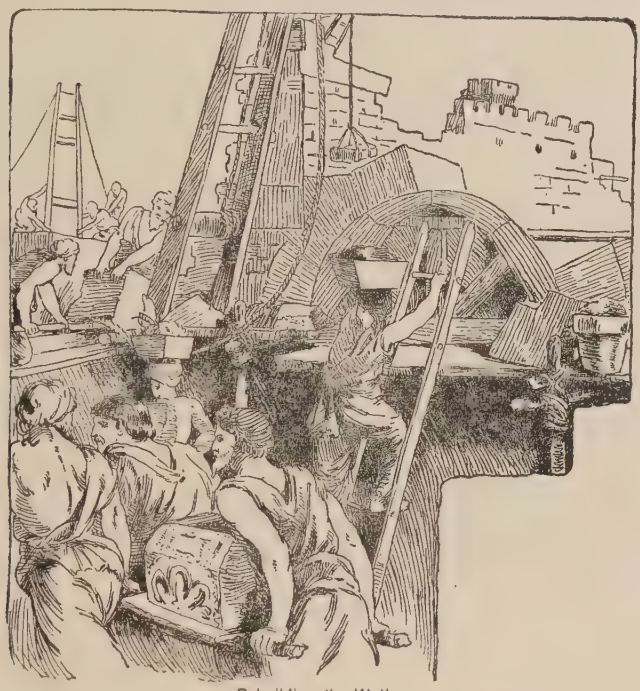
matured them, and become able to answer all possible objections. Therefore he went out quietly by night — one would think it was moonlight at least — and with only a few companions he made his toilsome way among the enormous blocks of stone lying confusedly on the ground, with here and there the black, charred ruins of the city gates. With the joy of finding long-known friends Nehemiah records each gate that he came to, and his brief account of the walk is invaluable to antiquarians. But at last the tumbled masses of rock became too difficult for the sure-footed mule on which he rode and he had to proceed on foot. He does not tell us whether he completed the circuit or was forced to go back the way he came. Anyway, he had gained a comprehensive idea of the extent of the desolation and of the great task which lay before him.

Inspiring the Jews. Nehemiah's next step — which he probably took the following day — was to call a council of the leading Jews. The wise worker believes in coöperation and in conference. "Everybody is wiser than anybody." Nehemiah, therefore, laid his plans before the head men of Jerusalem, and together they decided on a plan of action. They would not need much new stone, but merely to restore to their places the enormous blocks of the ancient builders. It was decided to summon to the work men of all classes, and to set the men of each section to work on the part of the wall nearest their own homes. They would take more interest in providing

6. So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto half *the height* thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

for the defence of their own loved ones and property, and the wives could readily bring them food. That the work might be done speedily because of their enemies, men from the nearby villages and cities, from Jericho, Tekoa, Gibeon, Mizpeh, Zanosh, Beth-haccarem, Beth-zur, and Keilah, would be summoned to join in the labor. It was a shrewd plan, and Nehemiah was able to inspire great enthusiasm for it.

II. **HOW NEHEMIAH BUILT THE WALL**, Neh. 4, 6. ATTACK BY RIDICULE. The work, begun with so much energy and with practical unanimity, was not allowed



Rebuilding the Walls.

to proceed unopposed. All genuine workers must expect hindrances as part of the job. In this case the hindrance came from Samaria, the central province of Palestine north of Judah, which for centuries, as the seat of the Northern Kingdom, had been a bitter rival of the Southern Kingdom with its capital, Jerusalem.

Sanballat, who seems to have been the governor of Samaria, probably under appointment from the satrap of Syria, and Tobiah, his adjutant, were the heads of the opposition to Nehemiah. At first they used the easy and often effective weapon of ridicule. They called Nehemiah and his followers "weakling Jews." "What can they do?" they said. "Why, even a fox could knock down any wall they could build." They took good care that these taunts should get to the ears of the toilers in Jerusalem. Nehemiah evidently felt them, for he was a man of sensitive spirit and of quick temper; but he knew that the very best defence against ridicule is to pay no attention to it, so he went quietly and determinedly on with the work.

"The questions of Sanballat are the voices 'taunting, haunting, daunting,' that are directed always against the citadel of every heart that commits itself to a great cause and a hard fight." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

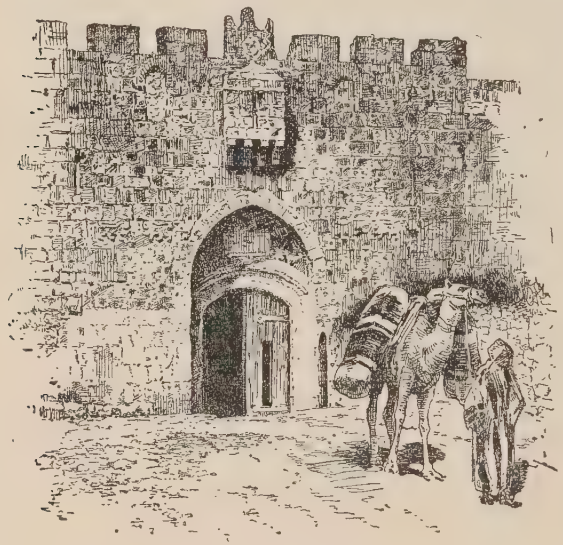
6. **So we built the wall.** "So," in spite of all their ridicule. **And all the wall was joined together unto half the height thereof.** That is, a continuous line of wall

7. But it came to pass that, when San-băl′-lăt, and Tō-bī′-ăh, and the Arabians, and the Ăm′-mŏn-ītes, and the Ăsh′-dŏd-ītes, heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth;

8. And they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to cause confusion therein.

around the city was completed to half the proposed or original height. **For the people had a mind to work.** "They were whole-hearted, enthusiastic, eager. And there is no magic, in any Arabian story, that helps on work so mightily as that. I heard of a gentleman who was talking to another about a mutual friend who had failed in business and he said, 'No wonder that he failed, he starved his work, he did not even put *himself* into it.'" — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

ATTACK BY THREATS. 7. **But it came to pass that, when Sanballat.** This governor of Samaria had already, probably on Nehemiah's way down to Jerusalem (Neh. 2 : 19), threatened the new governor of Jerusalem with the king's vengeance if he should attempt to refortify Jerusalem, doubtless reminding him of the Persian decree (Ezra 4 : 12, 21) that the walls of Jerusalem should not be rebuilt. Would Nehemiah rebel against the Persian authority? **And Tobiah.** Sanballat's Ammonite ally, ready to second his threats with force if need be. **And the Arabians.** Geshem, associated with Sanballat and Tobiah in Neh 2 : 19, was an Arabian, and may have led his fellow Arabs to join the attack. Sargon transplanted an Arab tribe to Samaria, and these may have been the Arabians here named; or, they may have been some band from the desert. **And the Ammonites.** The Ammonites were a desert tribe east of southern Palestine. Tobiah was an Ammonite, and may have influenced his kinsmen to join in the expedition. The Ammonites, descended from Lot, aided the Moabites against the Israelites, and were uniformly hostile to them. They were idolaters. **And the Ashdodites.** Ashdod was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines, a nation west of Palestine along the Mediterranean. Joshua did not conquer the Philistines, and throughout Old Testament times they were constant enemies of the Israelites, frequently invading Jewish territory. By New Testament times they had become merged in the Jewish nation. **Heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward.** These hostile tribes would of course be enraged at any indication of new vigor in their fallen enemy. **And that the breaches began to be stopped.** The wall, as already said, had been made continuous. **Then they were very wroth.** "All their projects were going astray. Once the walls were up, the despised and easily harassed Jews would be a thorn in the flesh of their neighbors." — *International Critical Commentary.*



The Walls of Jerusalem.

8. **And they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem.** Of course they were far away from the center of Persian authority, but that authority must have been weakly exercised at that time or they would not even have dreamed of such a thing. **And to cause confusion therein.** "To bring about a panic." — *New Century Bible.*

9. But we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10. And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11. And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst of them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12. And it came to pass that, when the Jews that dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times from all places, Ye must return unto us.

13. Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places, I set *there* the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers,

---

9. **But we made our prayer unto our God.** "The book of Nehemiah is a book of deeds, but it is also preëminently a book of prayer." — *Morrison.* **And set a watch against them day and night, because of them.** This guard may have been placed on the wall, but probably it was stationed beyond the wall as outposts. Thus the Jews watched and prayed, as Jesus bade his disciples (Matt. 26 : 41).

10. **And Judah said.** By Judah is meant not the tribe as such, but all the returned exiles, from whatever tribes, now living in Judah's territory. **The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed.** "The complaint seems to be, that by the drawing off of men from the working parties to act as guards, those parties were so weakened that they could not continue the work, the quantity of rubbish being so great." — *Rawlinson.* **And there is much rubbish.** The fragments of the wall broken down, the charred remnants of the gates, the rocks that had weathered into soil, the heaps of refuse thrown out by the city's inhabitants since the fall of Jerusalem. **So that we are not able to build the wall.** "To Nehemiah at such a crisis this complaint must have added greatly to the difficulties of the moment. It had all the tone of disaffection, and reminded him that in the face of a hostile foe he could place little confidence either in the power or in the willingness of the Jewish citizens to defend themselves." — *Bishop Ryle.*

11. **And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst of them.** Perhaps Nehemiah learned through spies of this surprise attack that was planned; perhaps he had friends outside the walls who learned the plans of the enemy and told him. **And slay them, and cause the work to cease.** They felt that only by killing Nehemiah and his followers could they put an end to the wall-building.

12. **And it came to pass that, when the Jews that dwelt by them came.** "Them" means Nehemiah's foes. These Jews would be the inhabitants of such villages as Jericho, Tekoa, Gibeon, Mizpah, and Zanoah, come to Jerusalem to help the wall-building and aid in guarding the city. **They said unto us ten times from all places.** That is, "They said to us over and over, from all these places where they lived." **Ye must return unto us.** That is, each set of villagers talked with their fellow villagers at work on the wall, and tried to get them to leave their labors and return home to help in its defence. This was another complication for Nehemiah.

13. **Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places.** The Hebrew is not clear, but it probably means that Nehemiah defended the parts of the wall that were lowest, and so most open to attack, by placing special guards in the open spaces back of them. **I set there the people after their families.** The different clans or families were set to work on different portions of the wall, and the same wise arrangement was followed in the defence of the wall. As they worked, very often, on the wall opposite their own houses, "many would thus be required merely to defend their own homes." — *Cambridge Bible.* **With their swords, their spears, and their bows.** The weapons are named in the inverse order of their use, for the bows would come into play with the enemy at a distance, the spears as they drew nearer, and the swords in hand-to-hand conflict.

14. **And I looked, and rose up.** "Looked" may imply that Nehemiah saw the enemy actually advancing. **And said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people.** The nobles were the aristocracy of Jerusalem, the rulers were the chosen officials. **Be not ye afraid of them.** There is only one fear that should

and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

---

come into the heart of a true man: fear to disobey God. **Remember the Lord, who is great and terrible.** "The reigning fear of God is the best antidote against the insnaring fear of man." — *Matthew Henry.* **And fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your homes.** "To the Jews the contest must be for their very existence as a people. Their foes are banded together to compass the extermination of their race and name. The brotherhood of the race (brethren), the blessings of family and home (sons and daughters), the ties of personal affection (wives) or cherished ancestral inheritance (house) were at stake. The enemy against whom they fought knew no pity." — *Bishop Ryle.*

15. **And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us.** That is, that they intended to make a surprise attack upon us. **And God had brought their counsel to nought.** God had frustrated all their plans. It was done through Nehemiah's wise precautions and courageous energy, but he knew that both wisdom and energy came to him from God. **That we returned all of us to the wall.** "This verse remarkably condenses the frustration of the attempt and the cessation of the special guard." — *Ellicott.* **Every one unto his work.** They took up their tasks again, but they also kept on their guard, some of them standing full armed over the workers, and the laborers themselves keeping their weapons at hand. Nehemiah was not to be caught napping.

ATTACK BY TREACHERY. The next assault upon Nehemiah was a call to a conference. "Come out to one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (about twenty miles north of Jerusalem), was the plausible message. It was a summons to arbitrate differences, when there was nothing to arbitrate. It would take Nehemiah away from Jerusalem for three or four days, and thus delay the work. Probably he would never return, for it was doubtless a plot to assassinate him. Nehemiah gave the famous answer, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: *why* should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" There is nothing like absorption in a noble task to save one from the assaults of evil. No good ever comes from parleying with the wicked.

*Illustration.* "When William Carey the missionary was asked by England, owing to his knowledge of India and its people, to be its minister to the court of Ava, he replied in the words of Nehemiah, 'I am doing a great work, and cannot come down.' When, stopping for a little while to discharge a work important to his country, he received $100,000 for it, he turned it over to the cause of foreign missions." — *Rev. M. B. Wharton, D.D.*

ATTACK BY SLANDER. Four times Sanballat sent this invitation, but the fifth time the crafty governor of Samaria gave a new pretext for a conference, the report that Nehemiah was building the walls with the intention of rebelling against Persia and setting himself up as king. Though Sanballat declared that he would report this slander to Artaxerxes, Nehemiah did not deign to discuss it with him, but merely replied that Sanballat had himself invented the rumor. So Nehemiah kept on working, which is the best way to answer all slander.

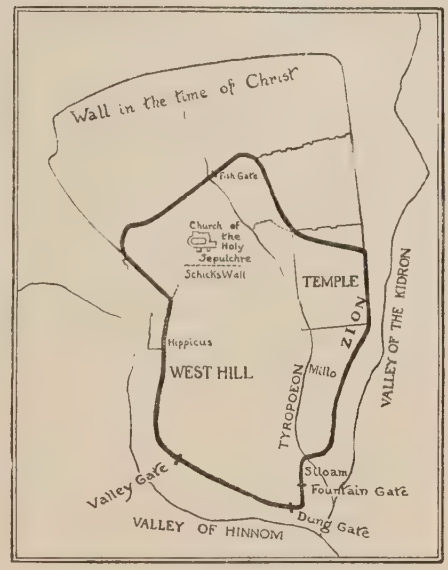
ENEMIES WITHIN THE WALLS. The next attack upon Nehemiah was the most subtle of all, for it was made through his religious feelings. Sanballat and Tobiah bribed a priest and prophet named Shemaiah to entreat Nehemiah, as if uttering a divine message, to hide with him in the temple, shutting the doors against his enemies who were seeking his life. "Should such a man as I flee?" exclaimed Nehemiah, indignantly and nobly. He refused to give his foes a handle against him by the illegal act of entering the sanctuary where only the priests might go. He knew well that God's approval was a wall of defence around him wherever he might be.

"SO THE WALL WAS FINISHED." It took fifty-two days to complete the rebuilding — a remarkably short time for so large a work. But we must remember that many were engaged in the task, that much of the wall needed only to be repaired and not built up from the ground, that the stones were at hand and had but to be

extricated from the rubbish, that there was the most careful system, and especially that the workers were spurred on by a consciousness of danger and by the ceaseless urgings of a great leader. With system and zeal, and with the help of God, any Christian or any body of Christians can accomplish in a short time work that seems impossible.

III. **HOW NEHEMIAH STOOD FOR THE RIGHT**, Neh. 5; 8:9–12; 12:31—13:31. CONDEMNING USURY. Nehemiah soon found that he could do nothing that would permanently help the Jews without bettering their social condition. They had been ground down by rapacious governors. The hostility of the Samaritans had prevented general prosperity. The rich Jews had taken advantage of their poorer neighbors and had loaned money to them only at high interest, whereas the law forbade their taking any interest whatever. When they were in still greater straits, the wealthy had taken mortgages on their lands and houses, which they gradually came to own. Finally the poor had in many cases sold themselves into slavery to the rich Jews and even to the heathen. They were in terrible plight.

Nehemiah's warm heart bled for the misery of his countrymen. His predecessors had exacted a fat salary; he accepted none whatever, and maintained his establishment and his assistants from his own private means. Moreover, he called together all the rich Jews, sternly rebuked them for their cruelty and greed, and commanded them to release their fellow Jews from their debts. This, with shame and in many cases with real contrition, they promised to do, and Nehemiah called in the priests who administered solemn oaths that these promises should be kept.




The Walls of Jerusalem.

The heavy line is probably nearly the wall Nehemiah repaired. The addition at the north is the line of the wall in the time of Christ. Jerusalem with the present wall is one of the few surviving walled cities of the world.

HONORING THE LAW OF GOD. Nehemiah was a layman, having authority in secular matters; but he felt the need of a colleague to promote religion, which he regarded as the one great need of the people. This colleague he found in Ezra the scribe, who may have been in Jerusalem during the rebuilding of the wall, but who, more likely, had returned to Babylon and had been recalled by Nehemiah. It was Ezra who took the lead in the public reading of the Bible with explanations, and the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles which followed it. Nehemiah, however, stood by Ezra in all these solemn proceedings, rejoicing in them, and his name stands first in the long list of those who covenanted to obey the law of God which had been read to them.

PRAISING JEHOVAH. "The walls were at last finished in fifty-two days from their commencement, and their completion greatly impressed the numerous enemies of the community. Measures were now taken to bring within the city a population equal to its permanent defence; and this attained, the walls were consecrated with great solemnity. Two choirs started from a fixed point: one, with Ezra at the head of the priests and Levites, going round the northern half of the city, while the other went around the southern half, the two meeting at the temple, where numerous sacrifices were offered, amidst the loud rejoicings of the people." — *Cunningham Geikie.*

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE. When all this was accomplished Nehemiah felt that his work was done, and gave the lie to the slanderous statement that he sought to be king in Jerusalem by returning to Persia to report to Artaxerxes. He remained in Persia for twelve years, and then was sent back to Jerusalem for a second administration whose length is not known. The first thing he noted was the desecration of the temple by the high priest Eliashib, related to Tobiah, who had moved his own house-

hold goods into a chamber of the temple which had been set apart to sacred uses, as a place for storing the meal offerings, the frankincense, and the tithes. It did not take Nehemiah long to oust the high priest's goods, and restore the chamber to its proper use. It was an act quite similar to Christ's cleansing of the temple.

Providing for the Temple. It was not enough for Nehemiah to purify the temple, he must establish it in permanent strength. The people had not been supporting the Levites, who ministered in the temple, and these had been obliged, in order to escape starvation, to flee into the country and till the ground. Nehemiah enforced the ancient law of tithe-paying, recalled the Levites, and thus maintained the temple services in full force with a supply of well-sustained ministers.

Preserving the Sabbath. Nehemiah's next reform dealt with the Sabbath, which he found being desecrated by the treading out of grapes to make wine, and by the bringing in of produce from the country; besides, foreigners from Tyre were allowed to sell fish and other articles of merchandise to the Jews on that day. Nehemiah rebuked the nobles for this, and shut the city gates against traffic on the Sabbath. The traders camped outside the walls and did business there with the Jews that came out to them, but Nehemiah put a stop to that practice. He made his reform permanent by charging the Levites with the duty of watching the city gates and seeing that the Sabbath was honored there.

Forbidding Heathen Wives. The most difficult of all Nehemiah's reforms is the last named in his book. He found a great evil existing, the marriage of Jewish men with heathen women — Philistines, Ammonites, and Moabites. This sin had even been committed by the grandson of the high priest. With every manifestation of indignation and hot wrath, extending even to personal violence, Nehemiah condemned this practice, so fruitful of harm in the history of his nation. He forbade its continuance, and his command must have had great influence in preserving the purity of the Hebrew race and religion.

Nehemiahs Needed To-day. "Nehemiah and his companions are a standing rebuke to that spirit which is often so sadly prevalent nowadays, where there is something weak and unmanly in religion." — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.*

"To do one's duty quietly and serenely when tongues are scurrilous and eyes suspicious; never to lose one's purpose or one's peace though everything that one does is misinterpreted; it may be that in the eye of heaven there is as great a fortitude in that as in any gallant action of the battlefield. Now that is what strikes one about Nehemiah." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"Nehemiah was a self-contained man. A man of his own counsel. A man with the counsel of God alone in his mind and in his heart. A reserved and a resolute man. A man to take the command of other men. A man who will see things with his own eyes, and that without all eyes seeing him. A man in no haste or hurry. He will not begin till he has counted the cost. And then he will not stop till he has finished his work." — *Alexander Whyte.*

"You have seen how exquisitely coherent was Nehemiah's course; how he used the world as not abusing it; how he was more than conqueror through him that loved us. Go and do ye likewise." — *Canon Hugh Stowell.*

## LESSON XII. — June 17.

## ESTHER, THE PATRIOT QUEEN. — The Book of Esther.

### (A Survey of Esther's Life.)

### PRINT Esther 4 : 13—5 : 3.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* — Esth. 4 : 14.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 124.
**Primary Topic** : Esther, the Brave Queen.
**Lesson Material** : Esth. 4 : 6—5 : 3. Print Esth. 4 : 13—5 : 3.
**Memory Verse** : I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Ps. 23 : 4.
**Junior Topic** : What Esther Did for Her People.
**Lesson Material** : Esth. 3 : 1–6; 4 : 1—5 : 3. Print Esth. 4 : 13—5 : 3.
**Memory Verse** : Esth. 4 : 14.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Esther's Heroism.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Esther : A Study of Patriotism.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will omit the story of Vashti, and simply picture the rise of the young Jewish girl to be queen of a mighty empire, the peril that threatened her people from the wicked Haman, and how she prevailed on the king to save her people. There are two lessons to be taught — personal bravery and true patriotism. Show what dangers call for courage in the lives of your pupils, however young, and also what even the youngest child can do for his country — for his neighborhood and his family are parts of that country.

**The Older Classes** will review the entire book. One may give the plot succinctly, possibly in the form of a letter written by Mordecai to a cousin in Jerusalem. Another may speak of the literary characteristics of the book. Still others may discuss its authenticity, its date and authorship, the doubts concerning it and their answers, its lessons of courage and of patriotism as applied to our day.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Vashti was deposed (Beecher), B.C. 483. Persians defeated at Thermopylæ and Salamis, B.C. 480. Esther becomes queen, B.C. 479. Esther saves the Jews, B.C. 474.

**Place.** — Shushan (Susa), in Elam, north of the Persian Gulf, capital of the Persian Empire (Babylonia and Ecbatana also being capitals).

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Objections raised against the book of Esther.
Main object of the book of Esther.
The characters of Vashti and Esther contrasted.
Mordecai compared with Naboth.
What Esther can teach modern Christians.
Lessons for to-day from the book of Esther.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Esther : A Study of Patriotism.**

I. HAMAN'S PLOT AGAINST THE JEWS, Esth. 1—3.
   The dismissal of brave Vashti.
   The choice of beautiful Esther.
   The independence of Mordecai.
   The wrath of Haman.

II. ESTHER FOILS HAMAN'S PLOT, Esth. 4 : 1—8 : 2.
   Accepting a hazardous task.
   Carrying it out prayerfully and bravely.
   The wonderful ways of Providence.

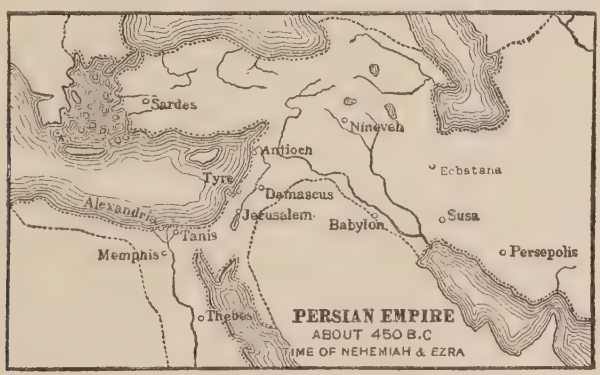
III. THE JEWS STAND FOR THEIR LIVES, Esth. 8 : 3—10 : 3.
   A decree that could not be annulled.
   The Jews meet their foes.
   The meaning of the feast of Purim.
   Patriotic lessons from Esther.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The story of Esther by Holbein ("Icones") and Tissot. Scenes in the life of Esther by Veronese, Tintoretto, Lucas van Leyden, Rembrandt, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Michelangelo.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on the women of the Bible by Margaret E. Sangster, Horton, Broughton, Wharton, Headley, Aguilar, Martyn. Bishop Doane in *Women of the Bible*. J. G. Greenhough in another book of the same name. Books on Bible characters by Whyte, Geikie, Hastings, White, etc. *Ruth and Esther* by William M. Taylor. Works on the book of Esther by Adeney (*Expositor's Bible*), Cumming, Davidson, Raleigh, Streane (*Cambridge Bible*), Davies (*New Century Bible*), Paton (*International Critical Commentary*), Sayce, etc. Chapters in Burrell's "*For Christ's Crown*," *Wayfarers of the Bible*, and *The Golden Passional*, Talmage's *Sermons, Vol. VI.*, Young's *Unfamiliar Texts*, Hugh Black's *Listening to God*, "*According to My Gospel*," and *The Gift of Influence*.



I. **HAMAN'S PLOT AGAINST THE JEWS**, Esth. 1—3. THE DISMISSAL OF BRAVE VASHTI. "There is no more interesting book in the Bible than the book of Esther." — *Rev. Len G. Broughton, D.D.* It is a great favorite among the Jews, at times outranking in their affection and honor all the rest of the Bible. "The intensity of its patriotic spirit laid fast hold on the sentiment of the nation. At various epochs of persecution the perusal of its pages has given the Jews courage, and has strengthened their confidence in themselves as reserved through all trials and troubles for a lofty destiny. The book was entitled The Megillah (or Roll) *par excellence*, and the copies of it were especially adorned and beautified. It was specially directed that women and children should hear it read on the occasion of the Purim festival." — *Rev. A. W. Streane, D.D.*

Megillah — the book of Esther.

A Hebrew Manuscript, 7 feet long, 4 inches wide, written by a Jerusalem scribe. In a self-rolling olive-wood case. On the outside, beautiful carvings representing different sites in the Holy Land.

The story of the noble Esther opens with the story of an equally noble woman, Vashti, the queen of Ahasuerus. This Ahasuerus was the famous Xerxes, king of Persia, a monarch possessed of vast and absolute power, yet weak, sensual, and vain, as the book of Esther pictures him. In the midst of his drunken carousing with his nobles and people he sent for Vashti, that he might display her beauty before all the revellers. With indignation and high courage Vashti refused to obey the abominable command. Thereupon Xerxes, on advice of the tipsy nobles, sent Vashti out of the palace, — very likely to summary execution, — while far and wide over his immense realms was published the decree "that every man should bear rule in his own house."

"The worst effect of this vice of drunkenness is its degrading influence on the conduct and character of men. It robs its victims of self-respect and manliness, and sends them to wallow in the mire with swinish obscenity. In this heedless folly the royal debauchee hurls himself over the precipice, from the height of his royal dignity down to the very pit of ignominy, and then he is only enraged that Vashti refuses to be dragged down with him. It is a revolting scene, and one to show how the awful vice of drunkenness levels all distinctions; here it outrages the most sacred rules of Oriental etiquette." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.*

THE CHOICE OF BEAUTIFUL ESTHER. When the king, come to his senses, began to grieve for the lost Vashti, his courtiers quickly proposed a diversion precisely to his taste, that all lands should be searched for beautiful young women who should be brought to his palace, and from them all he was to select a new queen. This was done, and so Esther comes upon the scene.

Her name was Hadassah (Hebrew, "myrtle"), Esther seeming to be a name given her later. It may mean "star," or it may be formed from "Istar," the Venus of that land. She was the cousin of Mordecai, a Jewish exile, a porter at the palace gate, who had adopted her and reared her as his own daughter. Brought to the palace, her modesty and loveliness, and the sweetness of her charaeter, won all hearts, and won the heart of Xerxes also, who at once made her his queen. From a humble position she had in an instant risen to the mightiest throne on earth.

*Illustration.* "Joan of Arc, from a peasant girl, became the leader of armies. The maid of Saragossa, from a quiet maiden, became the glory of the Spanish army. The daughter of a washerwoman in Germany married the cavalier of a duke, and a humble actress became the wife of the duke of Meiningen, succeeding the deceased daughter of the king of Prussia. But when was there ever before or since Esther a country girl who could leap from a hovel to a throne?" — *Rev. M. B. Wharton, D.D.*

THE INDEPENDENCE OF MORDECAI. According to Mordecai's instructions, Esther had kept secret the fact that she was a Jew, and so Mordecai was not, as was the custom, elevated with her, but continued in his lowly porter's position. While there, he learned of a dastardly plot against the king's life, framed by two chamberlains who guarded the door of the king's bedchamber and so had every opportunity to slay him. Through Esther Mordecai made the plot known to Xerxes, the plotters were hanged, and a record was made of Mordecai's good deed, though for some reason he was not rewarded.

13. Then Môr'-dĕ-cāi bade them return answer unto Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy

---

Next appears on the scene Haman, "the Judas of the Old Testament." He was descended from Agag, whom King Saul conquered, and Mordecai was descended from King Saul himself, so that the two were hereditary foes. Now Haman was the king's favorite courtier, exalted to be his grand vizier, and every one was ordered to bow down before him; but this the stout-hearted Mordecai refused to do. He doubtless knew Haman's wickedness, and his religion forbade his bowing down in worship before any man.

THE WRATH OF HAMAN. Mordecai's refusal to bend low before Haman was made known to the grand vizier, and aroused his hot displeasure. He knew that Mordecai was a Jew, and determined to punish him in the most cruel way possible, by involving all his race with his ruin. He sought to learn the most propitious time for this event by casting Purim, that is, a lot. Some think that this entire book was, written to show the origin of the Jewish feast of Purim, that is, their feast of Lots, which is celebrated to this day.

The lot may have been dice, or bits of wood, or strips of paper or parchment. The way they fell was interpreted as favorable or unfavorable according to definite rules. Haman cast lots every day throughout a whole year, and was unsuccessful till he came to the very last month, and the thirteenth day thereof. Then he approached Xerxes with a request for authority to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom, bribing the king with the promise of 10,000 talents of silver (about $18,750,000), equal in value to about ten times the same sum to-day. This bribe Haman expected to get, and far more, from the plunder of the rich Jews. Earlier in his reign Xerxes had declined a larger sum which one of his subjects offered him; but since that time he had made his vast and fearfully expensive expedition against Greece, so that the royal treasury needed relief. Therefore he gave Haman authority for the dreadful deed, and messages to that effect were sent by swift riders over all his domain. "To those who are only too well acquainted with the habits of despotic rulers it all appears grimly probable." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

II. **ESTHER FOILS HAMAN'S PLOT**, Esth. 4:1—8:2. Then terror seized upon all the Jews, and wild lamentations arose everywhere. Mordecai especially wore coarse sackcloth and sprinkled ashes on his head, the well-known signs of mourning. Esther heard of it, and sent clothing to her cousin, since he would not be allowed to enter the palace grounds in his sad attire; but he would not wear it. Then she sent one of the king's chamberlains to ask the cause of his grief. Thus the whole story became known to Esther, with the imminent peril of her race, together with Mordecai's entreaty that Esther would see the king herself and save her people. "But how can I?" was Esther's despairing message to her cousin. "The king has not summoned me for thirty days, and it is death to approach him unsummoned, unless he holds out his golden sceptre." This is the critical situation when our special lesson text opens.

13. **Then Mordecai bade them return answer unto Esther.** His message must have been delivered very secretly, for it was doubly necessary now to conceal the fact that Esther was a Jewess. **Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house.** "Do not imagine yourself safe even secluded as you are in the heart of the royal palace, surrounded by an extensive park. The king's edict is all-comprehensive, and your Jewish birth is sure to come out." Esther had expressed herself as afraid to break in on the king; she might better be afraid *not* to do it. **More than all the Jews.** These words contain an appeal to Esther not to separate herself from her race by any selfish fear.

14. **For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time.** That is always — *at the time* — the easiest course with reference to an evil: simply keep quiet and let events take their course. **Then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.** "Not meaning simply from some human source, as when Judas Maccabæus sent an embassy to Rome to ask aid against Greek oppression (1 Macc. 8:17), or later, when his brother Jonathan applied in the same quarter and for the

father's house will perish: and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

15. Then Esther bade them return answer unto Môr′-dĕ-cāi,

16. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shu′-shăn, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast in like manner; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

17. So Môr′-dĕ-cāi went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

---

same object (1 Macc. 12 : 1). The reference here, though veiled after the reticent fashion of this book, is to the Divine agency, whether working through earthly means or not. Israel cannot perish." — *Cambridge Bible.* There is a sense in which God is dependent upon men as his agents; but he is never dependent upon any one man. If you will not do his work, you must look on shamefacedly and see that work done by another, who will have the strength, happiness, and honor which might have been yours. **But thou and thy father's house will perish.** Mordecai speaks with prophetic insight and utters a solemn warning: God would not allow the deliverance that might come from another source to benefit or save Esther if she refused to do her duty. "Mordecai's burning words transformed a giddy girl into a great national heroine." — *Dinsdale T. Young.* **And who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?** Mordecai recognized the workings of Providence. The movements of human lives are not made by blind chance. God was working in the strange chain of events which brought Esther to the throne, and perhaps in his infinite wisdom he was preparing for this very event. Great opportunities, great posts of honor, are also demands for great service and splendid hazards. *Noblesse oblige,* high rank is an obligation. To whom much is given, of him is much required. The world has not even yet come up to the standard raised in this book of Esther, though it is drawing nearer to it every year.

15. **Then Esther bade them return answer unto Mordecai.** "This noble, faithful, and believing appeal was not in vain. It brought Esther to immediate resolution." — *William M. Taylor.*

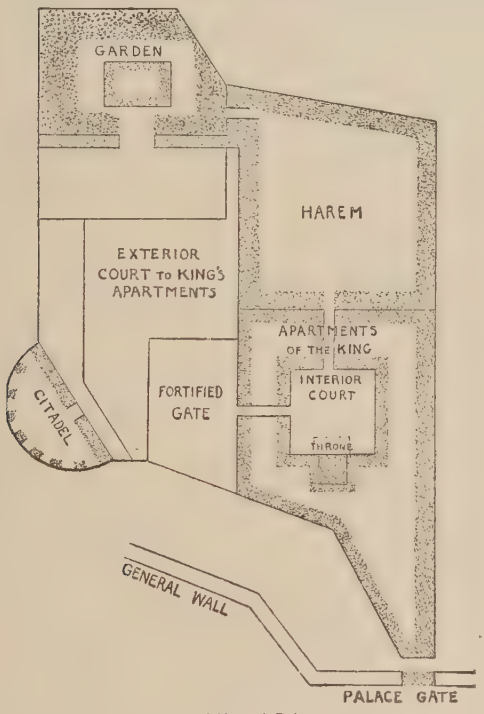
16. **Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan.** There must have been many, for later they were able to slay three hundred of their enemies (Esth. 9 : 15). **And fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day.** Prayer and fasting always went together in Jewish thought, the fasting being an aid to the prayers. We cannot doubt that it was so here. "From first to last this narrative is vitally religious." — *Margaret E. Sangster.* As to the length of the fast, it may not have extended beyond one whole day and parts of the preceding and following days, perhaps thirty-six hours in all, since the Jews reckoned parts of days as entire days in such a series; but they would have had no trouble in fasting for three entire days, for Orientals are very abstemious. **I also and my maidens will fast in like manner.** Esther did not hesitate for fear the fasting would injure her beauty, for she relied on God's answer to her prayers and those of her friends, and on nothing so frail as a beautiful face. But if the fast was shortened as suggested above, it would have made little difference in personal appearance. **And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law.** At least those Eastern despots accomplished one thing, they made people fear to break the law! **And if I perish, I perish.** Esther walked the path of duty though she understood clearly that it might prove to be the path of death. But there are many things harder than death, and failure to do one's duty is surely one of them. "If I perish," said brave Esther, "why, I perish, and that is all there is of it; but if I am untrue to my God and my people, that is *not* all there is of it: eternal shame and misery lie beyond it." "Acts of grandest heroism and self-sacrifice can be done in every sphere and relationship of life, and the valor of the veteran soldier may be exceeded by the quieter daring and fearlessness of some timid woman or gentle maiden." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

17. **So Mordecai went his way.** Doubtless with a heart full of dread for Esther, but doubtless also full of rejoicing over her brave decision. **And did according to all that Esther had commanded him.** That is, he set all the other Jews in Susa to praying and fasting.

Esther 5:1. Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the entrance of the house.

2. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight; and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

1. **Now it came to pass on the third day.** The third day of the fasting, which evidently, then, did not last three entire days. **That Esther put on her royal apparel.** While fasting she had clothed herself in mourning garb, but now she adorned herself with rich garments as befitted a queen. Her time of rejoicing had come. **And stood in the inner court of the king's house.** The king's house signifies the private apartments of Xerxes, which surrounded a court adorned, doubtless, with all the resources of art and of boundless wealth. These apartments were well shielded from any intrusion. **Over against the king's house.** The throneroom seems to have looked out upon the court through an open door. **And the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house.** The throne was gilded and splendidly fashioned, and the royal occupant, richly decked, surrounded by his gayly clad attendants, made a gorgeous sight that would have stayed any one less courageous than Esther. **Over against the entrance of the house.** The throneroom was adorned with rows of pillars, down which Xerxes, seated at the end opposite the entrance, could look, and so out into the courtyard.




Plan of Xerxes' Palace.

Discovered at Susa and Excavated by M. Dieulafoy.

The feast was held in the garden. Esther's home was in the harem opening into the garden. Xerxes sat on the throne in the interior court when Esther approached him. She stood at the interior court end of the passageway between the harem and the throneroom, when Xerxes held out his golden sceptre to her. Mordecai's place was by the palace gate.

2. **And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court.** She must have been a lovely vision, pale with anxiety, yet with her sweet face wearing a look of exalted confidence. **That she obtained favor in his sight.** The love of Xerxes had grown cold, but it all came back in a flood when he saw Esther. Was it not God who sent it back? **And the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand.** "As represented on the monuments, it resembled a long tapering rod with a headlike ornament at one end and a loop at the other. Xenophon says that three hundred sceptre-bearers attended the elder Cyrus." — *New Century Bible.* **So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.** That touch was in token of the grateful acceptance of the royal favor. Esther had won the first stage of her great battle!

*Illustration.* "What does this signify to us? *The power of intercessory prayer.* I knew a woman whose prayers went up night and day for an unbelieving husband and eight sons and daughters. One by one they were gathered in. She went to heaven

3. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom.

ten years ago and met her Lord, saying, 'Here am I and they whom thou hast given me.'" — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

3. **Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther?** He would perceive at once that Esther was running that risk because she wanted to obtain something from him, and his curiosity, if not his love, would be eager to know what it was. **It shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom.** This was a common formula, and did not mean all it said. It would have gone hard with any suppliant who might take advantage of it and actually ask for half of the kingdom! Esther did not make so frightful a mistake, but put off her real request for a time when she could be sure that Xerxes was in just the right mood for it. Prudent and self-restrained Esther! The only request she made was that the king and Haman would come on the morrow to a banquet which she had prepared for them, a request that was promptly granted. "It was a strange proceeding, inviting the deadly enemy of her people to her private banquet, aggrandizing him as it were still more, rendering her own task more fraught with danger, and filling the minds of her countrymen with doubts as to the purity of her intentions towards them." — *Grace Aguilar.*

THE WONDERFUL WAYS OF PROVIDENCE. The figures of the plot are now woven rapidly into the glowing fabric: Haman's boast of the honor done him, the rasping thought of Mordecai's independence, the gallows seventy-five feet high which he had erected for Mordecai; the king's uneasy night relieved by the reading of the chronicles, the discovery that Mordecai had not been rewarded for saving the king's life, the coming of Haman the next day to ask for authority to hang Mordecai; the turn of a question which made Haman himself outline royal honors for Mordecai, honors which Haman, gnashing his teeth, was obliged himself to carry out; and finally Esther's banquet and her petition for her own life and the life of her people, so grievously threatened by "*this wicked Haman.*" Those three words are the tremendous apex of the plot, a marvellous bringing together of all the interwindings of fate. The enraged king hangs Haman on the gallows where Mordecai was to have been hung, and all of Haman's possessions are bestowed upon Mordecai. Thus the threefold drama, the drama of Esther, the drama of Mordecai, and the drama of Haman, finds its virtual conclusion.

III. **THE JEWS STAND FOR THEIR LIVES,** Esther 8 : 3—10 : 3. A DECREE THAT COULD NOT BE ANNULLED. Haman was dead, but the fatal decree was not. Regarding it as Haman's decree, Esther begged Xerxes to annul it. The king, however, pointed out the fact that the king's authority had been given to the decree, and that therefore it could not be annulled: a strange irrevocableness which bound the king himself in his own net! However, Xerxes gave Mordecai full authority to counteract the influence of the decree in any way he could devise, and the quick wit of the Jew soon found a way. Sending messengers on swift horses all over the kingdom, he fixed a day on which all the Jews were allowed to take summary vengeance on any foe that might dare to attack them. So manifest was the royal favor that many Persians became Jews, whose condition was instantly and gloriously reversed.

THE JEWS MEET THEIR FOES. The conclusion of the book of Esther shows how far the world yet was from the meek and loving Jesus. On the day set by Haman for their destruction the Jews killed five hundred of their foes in Shushan alone, and also the ten sons of Haman. Not satisfied with this, Esther obtains from Xerxes another day of slaughter in which three hundred more of the Jews' enemies were killed in Shushan; and while these terrible deeds were done in the capital, no fewer than seventy-five thousand enemies of the Jews were slain in the provinces. This bloody vengeance had only one bright side: though they might have enriched themselves vastly, the Jews did not touch the spoil. They regarded themselves as Jehovah's executioners. "No one can rise from the study of these times and of this woman without a deep sense of thankfulness for the higher morality and the holier womanhood wrought out by the precepts and the life of the Virgin-born." — *Bishop W. C. Doane.*

THE MEANING OF THE FEAST OF PURIM. This great little book closes with a definite statement of the origin of the feast of Purim, which is still celebrated by Jews all over the world on the two days when the Jews had rest from their enemies, the

fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar (February-March). It has been a feast of hatred and also a feast of joyous merrymaking. In times of grievous oppression it has wonderfully cheered the Jews by reminding them that God was on their side. "It celebrates a famous deliverance of the Jews from a fearful danger. Now deliverance is the keynote of Jewish history. . . . Purged from its base associations of blood and cruelty, Purim may symbolize to us the triumph of the Church of Christ over her fiercest foes. The Israel of God can never conquer her enemies by force. The victory of the Church must be the victory of brotherly love, because brotherly love is the note of the true Church. But this victory Christ is winning throughout the ages, and the historical realization of it is to us the Christian counterpart of the story of Esther." — *Expositor's Bible.*

PATRIOTIC LESSONS FROM ESTHER. The strongest characters are often like Esther most timid and most in need of encouragement. Braggarts are not the best patriots.

No one, however insignificant, has a right to conclude that he can be of no service to his country. Esther was a poor girl, but she saved her race in Persia.

Prayer and patriotism are as closely linked to-day as in the time of Esther. No citizen will amount to much without God.

Esther was but one against the ruler who had millions of men at his bidding, and he a tyrant. You may be only one, but you are in a free country where one can count for all he is worth. Will you do less than Esther?

Patriotic ideas are nothing unless backed up with practical wisdom. Esther moved slowly and cautiously, and used all her arts to fascinate the king.

The patriot will thank God every day that he is not obliged to live under such a ruler as Xerxes, and will do all he can to spread among men the freedom which he enjoys.

## LESSON XIII. — June 24.

## REVIEW: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* — HEB. 12: 1.

**Devotional Reading**: Ps. 99.
**Primary Topic**: FAVORITE STORIES OF THE QUARTER.
**Memory Verse**: Serve Jehovah with gladness. Ps. 100: 2.
**Junior Topic**: FAVORITE HEROES AND HEROINES OF THE QUARTER.
**Memory Verse**: Heb. 12: 1.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: SOME GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: LESSONS FOR TO-DAY FROM THE LIVES OF OLD TESTAMENT CHARACTERS.

The teacher will select from the following plans for review the one that suits his class, or two or more plans may be combined as seems best.

### I. A CHARACTERISTIC REVIEW.

Each character of the quarter's lessons has some central quality which is the key of his life. The characters may be divided among the members of the class, some being repeated if you have more that eleven pupils, or, if you have fewer than eleven, assign two characters to the more capable pupils. Each will write an essay, two minutes long, on the central aspect of the character assigned. The following list may be used:

LESSON I. (Omit.)
LESSON II. Abraham's faith.
LESSON III. Joseph's helpfulness.
LESSON IV. Moses' leadership.
LESSON V. Ruth's fidelity.
LESSON VI. Samuel's uprightness.
LESSON VII. David's heroism.
LESSON VIII. Elijah's courage.
LESSON IX. Isaiah's insight.
LESSON X. Jeremiah's persistency.
LESSON XI. Nehemiah's executive ability.
LESSON XII. Esther's patriotism.

## II. THE "NEEDED TO-DAY" REVIEW.

In this series of lessons we have constantly applied to the present times the truths illustrated by these heroes and heroines of old. A valuable review will gather up all these pertinent examples in a series of talks or brief papers by different members of the class: "Abrahams Needed To-day," "Josephs of the Present Time," "The Moses Wanted in 1923," etc. Try to get time for a whiff of comment by the class after each character is presented.

## III. A QUESTION CONTEST.

To carry out this review divide the class into two sides, each with a leader. The sides will meet separately, preparing lists of questions on the eleven characters studied this quarter. The teacher should go over the questions, crossing out or revising those that are not suitable. In the lesson hour one side will put forward a member who will "stand fire," answering the questions put to him from the other side until he misses a question, when he will be retired. The teacher will record how many questions he has answered correctly. Then some member of the second side will "stand fire," and so it will continue until all the pupils have been "shot." The winning side will be the one with the largest total of correct answers. There may be time for repeating the entire process with the questions not used in the first contest; or, if your questions are all used up, they may be used over again.

## IV. A LETTER REVIEW.

An interesting form of review in an older class would take the form of imaginary letters concerning the eleven characters of the quarter, written by eleven pupils, each of whom will describe one of the characters in the first person, fancying himself to be some one connected with that person's history. The following list may be used, in whole or part:

A letter about Abraham written by a Canaanite.
A letter about Joseph written by the jailer.
A letter about Moses written by Caleb.
A letter about Ruth written by a Bethlehem farmer.
A letter about Samuel written by one of Saul's soldiers.
A letter about David written by a member of the tabernacle choir.
A letter about Elijah written by the son of the widow of Zarephath.
A letter about Isaiah written by one of Hezekiah's courtiers.
A letter about Jeremiah written by Baruch.
A letter about Nehemiah written by one of the men who helped him build the wall.
A letter about Esther written by Mordecai.

Of course the writers of these letters must use their imagination in selecting suitable characters to whom they will be addressing their accounts.

## V. A PICTURE TOURNAMENT.

Using the beautiful series of Lesson Pictures published by the publishers of this book, the teacher of a younger class may base upon it a very effective review. Divide the class into two sides, as evenly matched as possible, and each side with a leader. Place the picture of one lesson before the class and tell the sides that they are to take turns telling about the lesson which the picture illustrates, giving one fact at a time. Each side will consult in whispers, and the leader will give the fact determined on. Of course there are to be no repetitions, and the side which gives the last fact will hold the picture. The sides will take turns in beginning, and the side which wins the largest number of pictures will be victor in the tournament.

## VI. A PORTRAIT REVIEW.

In an older class the teacher may ask the members to write carefully prepared "pen portraits" of the quarter's characters, each taking a different one. Limit the time to three minutes each. Suggest that a pen portrait will picture the character's mind and personality, not review the circumstances of his or her life: it will tell what sort of person he or she was, so that the character could be recognized if met to-day, — "That man is an Elijah," "That woman is another Ruth." These portraits will be read to the class by their authors in the order of the lessons.

ST. JOHN AND ST. PETER, ST. MARK AND ST. PAUL
Old Pinakothek, Munich

Albert Dürer

# THIRD QUARTER.

JULY 1 — SEPTEMBER 30, 1923.

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT.

(SECOND QUARTER OF A SIX MONTHS' COURSE.)

## LESSON I (14*). — July 1.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST.** — Matthew 3 : 1–17; 11 : 2–15; Mark 6 : 14–29; Luke 1 : 5–80; 3 : 1–22; 7 : 18–28; John 1 : 6–37.

**(A Survey of the Life of John the Baptist.)**

**(May Be Used with Temperance Applications.)**

**PRINT Luke 3 : 3–8; 7 : 24–28.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people.* — LUKE 1 : 68.

**Devotional Reading** : Isa. 40 : 1–8.
**Reference Material** : Mal. 3 : 1–6.
**Primary Topic** : THE BABY JOHN.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 1 : 8–14, 57–64, 80.
**Memory Verse** : He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink. Luke 1 : 15.
**Junior Topic** : THE MAN WHO PREPARED THE WAY FOR JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 1 : 5–23; 3 : 3–8; 7 : 24–28; Mark 6 : 14–29. Print Luke 3 : 3–8; 7 : 24–28.
**Memory Verse** : John 1 : 23.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : CHARACTER AND WORK OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** study the wonderful birth of the baby John, how he was brought up in that pious home, and get a glimpse of the great preacher that he became. Teach the children that God has a plan for every boy or girl just as he had one for John the Baptist.

**The Junior Classes** take a wider view of John's life, including his imprisonment

* The number in parenthesis indicates the continuation number of this course.

and death and C ist's testimony to him. Teach the pupil ow God honors courage in his cause.

**The Older Classes** will pass in review the whole of John's life and the tragic circumstances of his death, seeing in him an example of a heroic follower of the truth. His qualities are greatly needed to-day in all departments of life, and it will be interesting and profitable to ask different members of the class to tell what they think John would do, if he were alive to-day, in the fields of politics, business, social life, and religious life.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — John the Baptist was born in June, B.C. 5. His ministry probably extended from the summer of A.D. 26 to March, A.D. 28. Jesus baptized, January, A.D. 27. Imprisonment of John, March, A.D. 27. He sends messengers to Jesus, midsummer, A.D. 28. Death of John, March, A.D. 29.

**Place.** — The wilderness of Judæa. The castle of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What made John the Baptist what he was.
Secrets of John's power.
John's rules of living.

Angel Appearing to Zacharias in the Temple.

John and Elijah compared.
Prophecies of John.
John's relation to Jesus.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT: The Herald of the Christ.

I. PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, Matt. 3:1–10; Luke 1:5–80; 3:3–8.
   The birth of John.
   The wilderness preacher.
   A call to repentance.

II. JOHN'S WITNESS TO CHRIST AND CHRIST'S WITNESS TO JOHN, Matt. 3:11–17; 11:2–15; Luke 7:24–28; John 1:6–37.
   The baptism of Jesus.
   Hailing Jesus as the Messiah.
   Doubts in the prison.
   The doubts answered.

III. JOHN DIES FOR THE TRUTH, Mark 6:14–29.
   A hero's death.
   What we may learn from the Baptist.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Scenes in the life of John the Baptist, by Ghiberti, Giotto, Ghirlandajo. Statues by Donatello. Birth, by Ghirlandajo, Roger van der Weyden. Preaching, by Andrea del Sarto. Baptism of Christ by Verocchio, Perugino, Francia, Roger van der Weyden. Dance of Salome, Ghirlandajo.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

F. B. Meyer's *John the Baptist.* Robertson's *John the Loyal.* Stalker's *The Two St. Johns.* Cumming's *John: the Baptist, Forerunner, and Martyr.* Feather's *The Last of the Prophets.* Reynolds's *John the Baptist.* Simpson's *The Prophet of the Highest.* Blakiston's *John the Baptist and His Relation to Jesus.* Works on Bible characters by Whyte, Matheson, Hastings, Wells, Greenhough (in *Men of the New Testament*). Lives of Christ by Farrar, Andrews, Geikie, Edersheim, Dawson, Watson, Lange, Neander, Wilson, Lees, Paterson-Smyth.

**I. THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST,** Matt. 3:1–10; Luke 1:5–80; 3:3–8. BIRTH OF JOHN. "The birth of the Baptist is woven along with that of Jesus into one exquisite story, in which we learn how his father, when offering incense in the temple, was informed, through an apparition of the angel Gabriel, of the approaching event, but was struck dumb for his unbelief; how the Virgin Mary, after being informed by the same angel of her impending destiny, paid a lengthened visit to her cousin Elisabeth on the eve of the Baptist's birth, and the two holy women affectionately greeted each other; and how, at the circumcising of the child, the tongue of the father was loosed, so that he was able to tell the name which his son was to bear, and at the same time to break forth into a hymn of praise for the honor conferred on his family. The Baptist's was a predestined life. It was to emphasize this fact that the element of miracle was allowed to enter so largely into his birth." — *James Stalker.*

John was born in the days of Herod the Great, King of Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, and the most important part of Peræa.

His father was Zacharias (the same as Zachariah, meaning "remembered by Jehovah"), who was a priest, and therefore highly honored by the Jews. He lived in an unnamed village in the upland region of Judæa, and went to Jerusalem when it became his turn to serve in the temple.

John's mother was Elisabeth (the same name as Elisheba, "one whose oath is by God"). She was a relative, perhaps a cousin, of the Virgin Mary, but was much older.

Both parents are described as "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Under their influence John's training would be of the best. He would be taught the beautiful meaning of the temple worship and especially its sacrifices. He would be instructed in the Bible and especially its wonderful prophecies of the Messiah. The surrounding country would fill his soul with the teachings of history. "The story of Abraham would often be recited in the proximity of Machpelah's sacred cave. The career of David could not be unfamiliar to a youth who was within easy reach of the haunts of the shepherd-psalmist. And the exploits of the Maccabees would stir his soul, as his parents recounted the deeds of Judas and his brethren, in which the ancient Hebrew faith and prowess had revived in one last glorious outburst." — *F. B. Meyer.*

Andrea Del Sarto.
John the Baptist in His Boyhood.
Pitti Gallery, Florence.

John was a Nazirite, — not, as often among the Jews, for only a brief period, but a Nazirite for life, as were Samuel and Samson. The Nazirite never cut his hair, never touched anything that was dead, and abstained from the fruit of the vine in every form. The thought of the Nazirite vow was holiness, separation from the world, purity of life, the subduing of the bodily appetites, the strength of purpose and the elevation of character that come from these. John was a conspicuous example of the value of temperance.

THE WILDERNESS PREACHER. John's aged parents died before he grew to manhood, and he had no sister or brother. Left alone in the world, he went to the region most closely akin to his own stern and strong spirit, the wild and barren country along the eastern stretch of the Judæan uplands, where a succession of gaunt hills and deep ravines tumble down to the Dead Sea. Near Jerusalem and Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron, it was yet a land of solitude where John could think his great thoughts undisturbed, and draw close to God in constant prayer.

Here John's life was simple in the extreme. He ate wild honey which he found in the rocky clefts, together with locusts, which are to this day prized in that region as an article of food. His garment reminds us of the shaggy mantle of Elijah, his prototype, for it was a coarse cloak of camel's hair thrown over his shoulders and confined at the waist by a strip of leather. His outdoor life bronzed his features and gave him the commanding power of perfect health.

LUKE 3:3. And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins;

4. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
Make his paths straight.

5. Every valley shall be filled,
And every mountain and hill shall be brought low;

3. **And he came into all the region round about the Jordan.** This was the wild country bordering the deep cleft in the rock which constitutes the valley of the lower Jordan. It is called the Arabah. **Preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.** From the earliest days the Jews had practised the rite of baptism to symbolize purification from the stains of sin and consecration to the service of God. Proselytes from other religions were admitted into Judaism by this form. By using it John asserted his authority and also his opinion that Jews as much as Gentiles needed to be washed from their sins and to be consecrated to the new kingdom of God which the Messiah would usher in. John's emphasis upon this rite gave him his name of "the Baptist," and also indicates that emphasis upon it had not been common.

4. **As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet.** The passage is Isa. 40:3. The New Testament places its seal upon the Old Testament by numerous quotations from all parts of it. **The voice of one crying in the wilderness.** By "the wilderness" Isaiah meant just such wild, uninhabited land as surrounded John when he spoke. It was a symbol to both men of the condition of mankind, living barren, profitless, sad, and ugly lives, when they might be living lives of beauty and blessedness. Such a condition surely called for a voice of warning and instruction such as Isaiah and John raised. **Make ye ready the way of the Lord.** This "way of the Lord" is "the way of holiness" described more fully in Isa. 35:8–10. The wicked are barred from this highway, but it is freely open to all whom God has ransomed from the bondage of sin. **Make his paths straight.** "The metaphor is derived from pioneers who go before the march of a king. There is a remarkable parallel in Josephus (*B. J.* III. 6, sec. 2), where he is describing the march of Vespasian, and says that among his vanguard were 'such as were to make the road even and straight, and if it were anywhere rough and hard to be passed over, to plane it, and to cut down the woods that hindered their march, that the army might not be tired.' The Jews fabled that the Pillar of Cloud and Fire in the desert smoothed the mountains and filled the valleys before them." — *F. W. Farrar.*

Wilderness of Judæa near the Dead Sea.

5. **Every valley shall be filled.** By valleys Isaiah meant the lives of the humble and lowly: they shall be brought up level with the common lot of man. Christ, when he came, said more: that the meek should inherit the earth, the last should be first. **And every mountain and hill shall be brought low.** By this Isaiah meant the opposite (Isa. 2:12–15; compare Zech. 4:7), that the proud of the earth, so high in their own opinion, so exalted above the poor and lowly, shall in the good time com-

And the crooked shall become straight,
And the rough ways smooth;
6. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.
7. He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
8. Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

---

ing be brought down from that vainglory to the common level of their fellows. **And the crooked shall become straight.** The meaning is that man's "crookedness," his perversity, his wilful turning from the right way, shall not prevent God's advancing along the right way. His kingdom shall come and his will shall be done, in spite of all his enemies can do to prevent it. How gloriously was this fulfilled in the lives of John and Christ! **And the rough ways smooth.** The stony paths of Palestine were indeed true symbols of the early course of Christianity. Persecution roughened the lives of the first Christians and the existence of the church for many years. But now the ways are smooth and easy before the kingdom of God. 6. **And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.** The hills of human pride shut in the view; lower them, and man's vision can range afar over the wide reaches of God's loving plans for his children. This is what is meant by the evangelization of all the earth, that every man shall see and realize the salvation which Christ has put within his reach.

7. **He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him.** "Multitudes" is plural because crowds came to John's preaching from many towns and from different directions. As Matthew wrote (Matt. 3 : 5), they came from "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan." **Ye offspring of vipers.** That poisonous snake, the viper, was common in the wilderness where John was, and the comparison of base men to broods of vipers was common among Hebrew writers (see Ps. 68 : 4; Isa. 14 : 9). John aimed this arrow at the hypocritical and hypercritical Pharisees and the quarrelsome, malicious Sadducees (Matt. 3 : 7), who afterwards became also the deadly enemies of our Lord. **Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** This "wrath to come" was the time of fear and woe which, as the prophets taught, was to herald and accompany the coming of the Messiah (Mal. 3 : 2; 4 : 1).

Titian.
John the Baptist Preaching.

8. **Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.** Show by your lives, John implied, that your repentance is real, and not an empty pretence like all the rest of your religion. John went on to say (Matt. 3 : 10) that an axe was ready to cut down every tree that did not bear good fruit, and it should be cast into the fire. **And begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.** That is, "as our father." The Jews were very proud of their descent from Abraham, and hardly thought it possible that one of Abraham's descendants, however vile, could fail of heaven. **For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.** John may have pointed to a viper crawling by; now he pointed to the loose rocks scattered all around him. "He who had made Adam from the clay could make sons of Abraham from those stones." — *Bengel.*

Luke 3 : 10–14 gives more particulars regarding John's preaching. It was so stern and convincing that it led people to ask the worthwhile question, "What shall we do?" John's practical answer was, "If you have two coats, give one of them to some one who has no coat; and share your food as well." When the tax-gatherers asked the same question his reply was ready: "Do not make people pay more taxes than is right." And when a soldier asked what *he* should do, John had a threefold answer:

"Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." This is good, sensible preaching; it is religion in daily life; it is bringing forth the fruits of repentance.

II. JOHN'S WITNESS TO CHRIST AND CHRIST'S WITNESS TO JOHN, Matt. 3:11–17; 11:2–15; Luke 7:24–28; John 1:6–37. Baptism of Jesus. John (Matt. 3:11, 12) interwove with his preaching the prophecy of the coming Messiah. He would be so much greater than John that his herald was not worthy to do for him the work of the meanest slave, even to carry his sandals or unfasten them (John 1:27). He would be greater than John because he was with the Father from the beginning. He would baptize his followers not with water but with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He would sift the grain from the chaff with his unfailing winnowing-fan, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. With such sayings John must have aroused great excitement in his audiences, and keen expectation for the future.

It is not certain that John ever saw his cousin Jesus before the day of his baptism; but as soon as he saw him he hailed him as the Lamb of God, the divine Sacrifice that was to take away the sin of the world. In this proclamation John showed wonderful spiritual insight into the meaning of Scripture, wonderful understanding of God's purposes, and proved himself the chief of the prophets.

When our Lord presented himself to his cousin to be baptized, John demurred. "Rather should *you* baptize *me*," he urged. But Jesus, not denying this, calmly said that he must fulfil all the requirements of the law, and so John baptized him in the waters of the Jordan. Then came a heavenly witness which confirmed John's insight, — the opened heavens, the Holy Spirit descending like a dove, and the first of three voices that spoke from heaven during Christ's ministry testifying that he was God's beloved Son.

Hailing Jesus as the Messiah. After baptizing Jesus, John continued to preach and to baptize, waiting perhaps for Jesus to make some open and public proclamation of himself as the Messiah. One day he was baptizing in Ænon, a place of springs probably east of Mt. Ebal, when some of his disciples, who had been debating with some of Christ's followers, complained to John that all men were resorting to Jesus for baptism and instruction. Then the Baptist made a very full testimony regarding Jesus, which John the apostle must have heard since he reports it so completely (John 3:23–36). He declared solemnly that Jesus came from heaven, that he spoke to men out of his preëxistence with God, that God's Holy Spirit beyond measure rested upon him, that God loved him and had given all things into his hand, and that belief on him was the earnest of everlasting life. No wonder John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." This was the fullest, noblest, most unselfish testimony to Christ that could be made, and must never be forgotten in our estimate of John the Baptist.

Doubts in the Prison. Herod Antipas was a son of Herod the Great by his third wife, and on the death of his father he became tetrarch ("king") of Galilee and of Peræa, east of the lower Jordan. He married the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king; but afterwards, while lodging in Rome with his half-brother, Herod Philip, he fell in love with his wife Herodias, and married her, sending his lawful wife back to her father. This was doubly sinful — a wrong to his half-brother, and also Herodias was his own niece, the daughter of another half-brother, Aristobulus. Aretas punished Antipas by waging a destructive war against him, and Herodias herself became the evil genius of her new husband's life.

This unholy marriage was boldly rebuked by John the Baptist to Herod's face, thus winning the deadly hatred of Herodias. She would gladly have had the daring prophet slain, but Herod's guilty conscience would not allow this. He did consent, however, to John's imprisonment, the Baptist being immured probably in "the Black Fortress," the castle of Machærus, built in a deep glen to the east of the Dead Sea.

This confinement must have been a sad calamity to John, used as he had been all his life to the free air of the desert. No wonder that, as word reached him from time to time of the doings of Jesus, so different in their peaceful quiet from the splendid career of conquest he had probably marked out for him, he began even to entertain doubts concerning his Messiahship, and sent to Jesus two of his own followers (perhaps they were the ones who had brought the news about Jesus), asking him the definite question, "Are you really the long-awaited Messiah? or must we look for another?"

The Doubts Answered. Our Saviour's answer was perfectly characteristic of him. It was a reply not in words, but in deeds: he worked many miracles, curing

Luke 7: 24. And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?

25. But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26. But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

---

sicknesses, blindness, demon-possession, and bade John's messengers tell him what they had seen, and also about the cures of deafness, of leprosy, and other diseases which they had heard the crowds bear witness to, besides the gracious preaching of

From a photograph.

The Hill Machærus, the Site of Herod's Palace, Where John Was Imprisoned.

the gospel to the poor. "And blessed is he," Jesus added significantly, "who does not find a stumblingblock in my acts or my words."

24. **And when the messengers of John were departed.** Doubtless Jesus sent them back with a direct word to John which is not here set down, some word of cheer and encouragement in his sore trials. **He began to say unto the multitudes concerning John.** Why did Jesus add this praise of John? Because he would not have the crowds think that the great Baptist was growing weak and faithless in his prison. Why did he not allow the messengers to hear the praise and tell John about it? Because of the qualification with which the praise had to conclude. So considerate was Jesus of his absent friend. **What went ye out into the wilderness to behold?** He implies that the ruling motive of most of them had been mere curiosity, as it certainly was, at least at first. **A reed shaken with the wind?** The Jordan beside which John preached was in many places lined with reeds, but John was not like those fragile, easily shaken plants, whatever they might judge from the wavering implied in the questions asked by his messengers. All the winds of cruel opposition could not shake his fidelity.

25. **A man clothed in soft raiment?** John certainly was not that, for he wore a mantle of coarse, harsh camel's hair, fastened with a leather girdle (Matt. 3 : 4). And his mind was as firm and stanch as his garments. **Behold, they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately** (luxuriously), **are in kings' courts** (palaces). The Herods in their various palaces, at Tiberias, Jerusalem, and Cæsarea Philippi, were noted for their fine garments and luxurious living, which was aped by their followers, the Herodian party. "John had been in palaces, but only to counsel and reprove. Our Lord on the only two occasions on which he entered palaces — on the last day of his life — was mocked by *bright apparel* (Luke 23 : 11), and a purple or scarlet robe (Matt. 27 : 28)." — *F. W. Farrar.*

26. **A prophet?** Matt. 21 : 26 tells us that John was regarded by all men as a prophet, that is, a man who in a peculiar and special way spoke the mind of God.

27. This is he of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

28. I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

---

**Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.** More, because he alone of the prophets was the immediate forerunner of the Messiah, proclaiming his arrival among men.

27. **This is he of whom it is written.** Another uniqueness in John's career is that he alone of the prophets was foretold by prophecy. The quotation is from Mal. 3 : 1. **Behold, I send my messenger before thy face.** Malachi wrote, in effect, "before *my* face," "he shall prepare the way before *me*," that is, before God. Jesus, as if recalling words his Father had spoken to *him*, said, "before *thy* face," that is, before Christ's face. **Who shall prepare the way before thee.** John prepared the way before Christ by arousing wide expectation of the coming of the Messiah, and by pointing him out when he came: "This is the Lamb of God."

28. **And I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John.** Jesus compared John (John 5 : 35) to a burning and shining light. He was the greatest of the prophets because he was the last, the climax of prophecy, the conclusion of the glorious succession, the closest to the world's Redeemer to whom they all looked forward so eagerly. None were greater than he in devotion, none so great as he in privilege. **Yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God.** The humblest follower of Jesus, who has entered into fellowship with him, has received his salvation, and through him has entered into the household of God. **Is greater than he.** Greater in knowledge of God, greater in confident expectation, greater in blessedness of daily communion with God, greater in outreach of power. John was "born of woman"; the humblest Christian is "born of water and the Spirit." "As the old legal maxim says, 'the least of the greatest is greater than the greatest of the least.' The smallest diamond is made of more precious substance than the largest flint." — *Cambridge Bible.*

III. **JOHN DIES FOR THE TRUTH**, Mark 6 : 14–29. A HERO'S DEATH. We are told of the influence which John the Baptist, though a prisoner, exerted over Herod Antipas. The tetrach sent often for John, as Felix used to send for his prisoner Paul, and talked with him. We may be sure that John's words did not mince matters, but we are assured that Herod enjoyed talking with him, and did many things that John urged; but, alas! he did *not* do the one thing that he should have done, send Herodias back to her lawful husband and himself seek the forgiveness of his lawful wife.

A Woman Bearing a Charger.

With the continuance of this intercourse Herodias grew more and more enraged and bent on revenge. At last her opportunity came. Like all the Herodian princes, Antipas celebrated his birthday with an elaborate entertainment, a custom which the Herods introduced into Palestine. For this feast Herodias furnished a rare treat, a dance by her own daughter Salome (the niece of Antipas). This dance was pantomimic, licentious, and performed in indecent attire, but Antipas was delighted with it, — so charmed that in his drunken excitement he promised Salome any gift she might ask. After consulting with her mother, Salome asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

Herod was "exceeding sorry," but in his weakness saw no way out of his dilemma.

The terrible deed was done, and the gory trophy presented to the dancing girl and carried by her to the exultant Herodias. John's disciples gave his body a sad and reverent burial, and then they went to Jesus, telling him the awful news, and receiving from him consolation and new courage. Thus the life of the heroic herald was merged, as he would have had it, in the life of the Messiah whom he came to proclaim.

What We May Learn from the Baptist. "Everything that we are told of John the Baptist is unique. The asceticism of his life in the desert, the startling message with which he broke the silence maintained by the spirit of prophecy for four hundred years, the incorruptible sincerity of his humility out of which no allurement could bribe him, the fearless honesty of his words, and the tragic horror of his death — all combine to give him a peculiar and distinctive place on the page of Scripture. He stands alone among the servants of God." — *Hastings.*

And yet all the essentials of this unique life have their teachings for us, and should bring forth fruit in our lives.

We may all accept the dedication of our lives made by godly parents, the plan for our lives formed by our Father in heaven.

We may all live simple lives, freed from the distractions, the waste, and the corruptions of worldliness, fixing our affections on things above.

We may all become filled with the Spirit of God.

We may all be true to the leadings of the Spirit, going where he leads, speaking the words he gives, and doing the deeds he commands.

In his strength we may face all opposition, overcome all hindrances, and even in what the world calls failure and defeat we may live the victorious life that was lived by John the Baptist, and finally die his victorious death.

To-day the Christian has greater work to do than the church has ever before had the opportunity of doing — social, patriotic, reform, missionary, and evangelistic tasks of supreme interest and necessity. These tasks call on every Christian to undertake them in the spirit and power of Elijah and John the Baptist. Let us — each of us — leap to the call.

## LESSON II (15). — July 8.

## MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS. — Matthew 1:18—2:5; 12:46–50; Luke 1:26–56; 2:1–52; John 2:1–11; 19:25–27.

(Survey of the Life of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.)

**PRINT Luke 2:41–52.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.* — Matt. 1:21.

**Devotional Reading**: Luke 1:46–55.
**Primary Topic**: Mary and the Baby Jesus.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 1:26–38; 2:1–20. Print Luke 2:8–20.
**Memory Verse**: Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21.
**Junior Topic**: Mary and the Boy Jesus.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 1:26–38; 2:1–20, 41–52. Print Luke 2:41–52.
**Memory Verse**: Luke 2:19.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: Notable Incidents in the Life of Mary.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will review the ever-beautiful story of Christ's birth. Emphasize the love of Mary for her child, and try to make the children realize the love of their mothers for them and all that their mothers do for them.

**The Junior Classes** also review the Christmas story but add the interesting story of the boy Jesus in the temple and his education in Nazareth. This gives opportunity for many wise teachings regarding home life and school life.

**The Older Classes** will study all that is known about Mary, getting in their minds a clear picture of the elements of her beautiful character. Make it a lesson in ideal womanhood, such as any woman may aspire to for herself and any man seek for his wife.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The annunciation to Mary, March, B.C. 5. The birth of Jesus, December, B.C. 5. The child Jesus in the temple, April, A.D. 8. The marriage at Cana, February, A.D. 27. "Who is my mother?" autumn, A.D. 28. Death of Jesus, April 7, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Egypt.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Proofs of the virgin birth.
The character of Mary.
What Mary did for Jesus.
What Jesus did for Mary.
Why so few references to Mary.
Mary as pictured by the great artists.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT: What We Know about the Mother of Jesus.

I. MARY IN BETHLEHEM AND EGYPT, Matt. 1:18—2:15; Luke 1:26–56; 2:1–38.

The annunciation.
The Magnificat.
The wonderful night.
The wise men.
The flight into Egypt.

II. MARY IN JERUSALEM AND GALILEE, Matt. 12:46–50; Luke 2:39–52; John 2:1–11.

How Mary brought up the Christ Child.
Jesus in his Father's house.
Subject to his parents.
The first miracle.
"Who is my mother?"

III. MARY AT THE CROSS, John 19:25–27.

Her grief at Calvary.
Her life after the resurrection.
Her character.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Almost numberless Madonnas, by all the great masters of art. The Annunciation, by Giotto, Fra Angelico, Andrea del Sarto, Tintoretto, the Van Eycks. Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Flandrin. The Nativity, by Correggio, Reynolds, Copley, Burne-Jones, Lafarge. The Wise Men, by Roger van der Weyden, Rubens, Burne-Jones. The Flight into Egypt, by Claude Lorraine. The Marriage at Cana, by Giotto, Tintoretto, Veronese. Jesus among the Doctors, by Hofmann. The Visit of Mary to Elizabeth, by Albertinelli, Titian. Betrothal of Joseph and Mary, by Raphael. "The Shadow of Death," by Holman Hunt.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Rev. P. Carnegie Simpson in *Women of the Bible*. Margaret E. Sangster's *The Women of the Bible*. Adeney's *Women of the New Testament*. Mrs. Charles's *Mary, the Handmaid of the Lord*. Wilson's *The Christ We Forget*. McCook's *Women Friends of Jesus*. Broughton's *Representative Women of the Bible*. Goulburn's *Gospel of the Childhood*. Clifford's *The Dawn of Manhood*. Freeman's *Concerning the Christ*. Alford's *Fireside Homilies*. Lorimer's *Jesus the World's Saviour. Sermons* by Price Collier. Glazebrook's *Prospice*. McClelland's *The Mind of Christ. My Father's Business and Mine*, by Rev. J. Frank Smith, D.D. Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*. Williams's *The Mother of Jesus*. Van Dyke's *The Lost Boy*.

I. **MARY IN BETHLEHEM AND EGYPT**, Matt. 1:18—2:15; Luke 1:26–56; 2:1–38. THE ANNUNCIATION. Mary, a maiden of the little hill town of Nazareth, in Galilee west of the Sea of Galilee, was engaged to be married to Joseph, the village carpenter, whose was an occupation of responsibility and honor.

It is quite likely that Mary was a cousin of Joseph, her father having been Heli, and the genealogical table in Luke 3:23–38 being Mary's. Thus Mary as well as Joseph was descended from David, and Jesus was "the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3, etc.).

Among the Jews betrothal took place a year before marriage. During this year Mary remained with her parents, but she and Joseph were regarded as already man and wife.

Isaiah (7:14) seven hundred and fifty years before, had prophesied that a virgin should give birth to a son whose name should be "Emmanuel," "God with us." This wonderful prophecy was fulfilled in Mary of Nazareth.

That it was to be fulfilled in her was announced to Mary by Gabriel, the angel who continually stands in the presence of God. He came to her and told her that she should have a son whose name would be Jesus, meaning "the salvation of Jehovah," a name which should be given him because he should save his people from their sins, as the angel afterwards said to Joseph. Moreover, the angel told her that her son should be great, and should reign as king forever; he should be born of the Holy Spirit and should thus be the Son of God. No announcement so marvellous was ever made to a woman or a man. Mary could not understand it, but she said humbly and obediently, "Be it unto me according to thy word."

"Whereto shall we liken this Blessed Mary Virgin,
Fruitful shoot from Jesse's root graciously emerging?
Lily we might call her, but Christ alone is white;
Rose delicious, but that Jesus is the one delight;
Flower of women, but her Firstborn is mankind's one flower:
He the Sun lights up all moons through their radiant hour.

'Blessed among women, highly favored,' thus
Glorious Gabriel hailed her, teaching words to us:
Whom devoutly copying we too cry 'All hail!'
Echoing on the music of glorious Gabriel." — *Christina G. Rossetti.*

The Magnificat. Mary's hymn when the coming of her divine Son was announced is called the *Magnificat* from its first word in the Latin version : " My soul doth *magnify* the Lord." " The character of Mary is revealed to us best in the words of this song. In it three features of her character appear : (1) *Her purity of heart.* Only a pure heart rejoices when God is very near. It is this holy gladness because God was come very near that Fra Angelico and other great painters have sought to depict in the faces of their Madonnas. (2) *Her humility*, which expresses itself by an utter forgetfulness of self. She simply praised the Lord. (3) *Her unselfishness.* She never thought of future ages as calling her great, or sovereign, or beautiful, or successful, or even saintly ; but she said, 'All generations shall call me blessed.' That is to say, through her and by this event which was happening to her, an endless good was to come to men, and it was of this that she rejoiced to think." — *Rev. P. Carnegie Simpson.*

Sinkel.

The Child Mary.

The Wonderful Night. The advent story is happily familiar to all : the levy of a tax by the Emperor Augustus ; the necessity that each Jew should go to his own city for the preliminary census ; the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, David's city, since they were both descended from David ; the rejection from the crowded inn of the little town; the birth of the world's Redeemer in a cave-stable belonging to the inn ; the angels' song over the Bethlehem fields and their announcement of the great event to the shepherds ; the visit of those shepherds to the manger, and their announcement of the wonderful event to all they could reach. We do not read that any who heard the shepherds believed them, or took their words to heart, except Mary ; but we are told that the mother of Jesus remembered them all, and pondered over them. The opening history of Christianity had at least one loving and eager student.

The Wise Men. If by any chance Mary had ceased to think about the marvellous circumstances attending the birth of Jesus, she would be set to wondering meditation again by the testimony to his Messiahship made by Simeon and Anna when, forty days after the birth of Jesus, Mary went to the temple for the ceremony of purification.

The arrival of the magi, or wise men, from the east must have set Mary to thinking still more earnestly than ever about the real nature of her wonderful Son. They may have come from Persia ; some say, from Egypt. That they were three in number is only a tradition ; also that they were kings or princes. They were certainly astronomers, watchers of the stars according to the crude science of the day ; and they had concluded from some unusual phenomenon — perhaps the apparent coming together of some of the planets in their march through the sky, perhaps the appearance of a " new " star, perhaps a comet, or perhaps the rising for several years in succes-

sion of the brightest star, Sirius, on the first (meaning " birth of the prince ") — that a great king had been born in Jerusalem.

Sanzio Raphael.
Madonna Del Gran Duca.
Pitti Gallery, Florence.

This picture received its name from having been once in the possession of a Grand Duke of Tuscany, who is said to have used it as a shrine in his devotions.

Their gifts would furnish additional matter for Mary's meditation, for the gold was for the king, the frankincense pointed to the worship of a God, and the myrrh — which was used in embalming — pointed mystically forward to the tragic death he was to die. Not for thirty-three years would Mary understand all of these symbolic gifts.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. The flight into Egypt, made necessary by Herod's murderous attempt to kill the new-born King whom he regarded as a claimant for his throne, must have been a strange experience for Mary. She was among friends, for there were many Jews in Egypt, that age-long place of refuge for the Hebrews; but she was surrounded by a thousand unusual sights, and every day the shame and horror of heathenism would be borne in upon her. It is not known how long the Holy Family remained in Egypt ; perhaps about two years. Matthew finds in this sojourn a fulfilment of the prophecy in Hos. 11 : 2, and whenever Mary heard those words read, or any reference to the coming of her race out of Egypt by a great deliverance, she would think of this providential experience. The stay in Egypt was not long enough to root the family there, as happened to so many Jewish fugitives, but as soon as Joseph heard of Herod's death they returned to Nazareth. Jesus, it was foretold, should be called a Nazarene.

II. **MARY IN JERUSALEM AND GALILEE**, Matt. 12 : 46–50 ; Luke 2 : 39–52 ; John 2 : 1–11. HOW MARY BROUGHT UP THE CHRIST CHILD. We are not told anything definitely about Christ's boyhood, but " we are permitted to see (1) That our Lord never attended the schools of the Rabbis (Mark 6 : 2 ; John 6 : 42 ; 7 : 15), and therefore that his teaching was absolutely original, and that he would therefore be regarded by the Rabbis as a ' man of the people,' or ' unlearned person.' (See Acts 4 : 13.) (2) That he had learned to write (John 8 : 6). (3) That he was acquainted not only with Aramaic, but with Hebrew, Greek, and perhaps Latin ; and (4) that he had been deeply impressed by the lessons of nature." — *F. W. Farrar.* We do not know how early Mary was left a widow, but probably the greater part of Christ's education was due to her loving and faithful care.

" No book of the law could have been possessed in that lowly dwelling. On the Sabbath day, ' as his custom was,' he doubtless went into the synagogue, and there where, when ' his hour ' came, he taught so that all men wondered, he must often have listened — listened to prophecies of which he was the object and fulfilment, and been silent. But day by day his ear was opened to the highest teaching, and he could indeed say, ' Thy law is within my heart.' " — *Mrs. Charles.*

" He drank deep draughts of those dear dreams and hopes which all Hebrew

LUKE 2:41. And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover.

42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast;

43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not;

mothers kept clean and bright in the cupboard of their faith. With the home for a schoolroom Mary and Joseph were his preceptors." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.*

JESUS IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE. There is only one incident that Luke could glean from the thirty silent years of Christ's life. He would doubtless have told more if he had heard more. A fictitious Gospel would have been full of them, as the false Gospels born of mere tradition and fancy are. But Luke was writing only what he knew.

Stone Manger.

The steps over the arch lead to the store-place for grain, etc.

41. **And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover.** Thus Joseph and Mary showed their regard for religion. It had been the custom, centuries before, to go up to Jerusalem three times a year, but that custom had long been abandoned. Women were not required to make this journey, but Mary, we may be sure, would be eager to go and worship in the temple. The passover was the great spring festival commemorating the escape of the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage, when the death angel *passed over* their dwellings, marked by the blood of the slain lamb, and fell upon the firstborn in each Egyptian home.

The Repose in Egypt. (Detail.) Oliver L. Merson.

42. **And when he was twelve years old.** At that age a Jewish boy became "a son of the law," and began to put on the phylacteries and to carry manly responsibilities. **They went up after the custom of the feast.** Fulfilling the laws regarding the observance of the passover.

43. **And when they had fulfilled the days.** They stayed through all seven days of the feast, for they loved the exercises of religion. It was not necessary to remain through the feast, and some went home after the first two days. **As they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem.** Josephus says that nearly three million Jews usually thronged to the passover — a host in which one boy would easily disappear. It must be remembered that in the East a boy of twelve is far more mature than such a boy with us. **And his parents knew it not.** "All those who lived north of Jerusalem, forming an immense caravan, would start with Joseph

44. But supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance:

45. And when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him.

46. And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions:

and Mary, and go by the same road. This would create great confusion ; and, amidst a general lading of mules and asses, and a general preparation for the day's journey, a single child might be easily missed. Moreover, we are told by some writers that it was the custom in these pilgrimages for all the men to travel in one company by themselves, and all the women in another, the boys travelling, as it might happen, either with their father or their mother. If this was the case, it is easy to understand how neither our Lord's mother nor her husband was made uneasy by missing him. St. Joseph would say, 'He is with his mother, no doubt'; and the Blessed Virgin would say, 'Doubtless Joseph is taking care of him.'" — *Dean Goulburn.*

The Carpenter's Son.
From a picture on the supposed site of Joseph's shop at Nazareth.

44. **But supposing him to be in the company.** The Greek implies that a group of neighbors and friends were travelling together. **They went a day's journey.** Very likely they had reached only Beeroth, six miles north of Jerusalem. **And they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.** "Had there been less acquaintance and intimacy there had been less risk of losing the child." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

45. **And when they found him not.** "At first thought it seems strange that a mother should have gone a day's journey without noting the absence of her son. Yet we can readily think that in a company of kindred and neighbors ordinary anxiety might have been relaxed; that the lad might have been entrusted to relatives in whose care he was supposed to be ; that perhaps there was less anxiety concerning such a child as Jesus, so ripe, so manly for one of his years, as the sequel showed." — *Rev. Henry C. McCook, D.D.* **They returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him.** The Greek participle expresses anxious and careful search, such as any parent will understand.

46. **And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple.** The three days probably included one day's journey away from Jerusalem, one day's journey back, and one day's search through the city. It is strange that they did not look in the temple first of all. "They who had been with him now twelve years were slow to think of looking for him in the place to which all his boyish enthusiasm tended." — *Dean Alford.* **Sitting in the midst of the teachers.** Probably this took place, not in the temple proper, but in one of the many chambers next to the temple, in the court surrounding it. Formerly the teachers sat and the pupils stood, but at this time it had become the custom for the pupils to sit at the feet of their teachers. Among the famous rabbis of the time who may have been present were Hillel, Sham-

47. And all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

48. And when they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.

49. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?

50. And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

---

mai, and the Nicodemus who afterwards came to Jesus by night. **Both hearing them, and asking them questions.** He listened modestly, and asked modest and proper questions, as any other pupil would; but we may be sure that his listening was eager and that his questions were wise and pointed It is exceedingly difficult to ask a good question.

Hofmann.

The Child Jesus in the Temple.

47. **And all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.** "So far had the education of Jesus been carried, when he was but twelve years old, that he was already entered into the great questions of the doctors, and was so profoundly taken by their high discussions that he must needs have a part in them himself, asking questions of his own. All this he did with so little appearance of pertness, and such wonderful beauty of manner, as well as in a tone so nearly divine, that they could only be 'astonished at his understanding and answers.'" — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

48. **And when they saw him, they were astonished.** They were peasants from a country town in far-off Galilee, full of awe in the presence of learned rabbis; and here was their boy quite at home among the great teachers! **And his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?** A rebuke is implied, and yet Mary also implied that Jesus may have had a good reason for his conduct. **Behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.** "Why was it that she and Joseph had to seek him so sorrowfully? Because they had left him to live his inner life alone." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.* This is too often the case with parents and their children.

49. **And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me?** "That word 'father' which Mary utters proves to be a kindling word. 'Does my father seek me? Do you not understand that God is my Father? He does not need to seek me, for I am ever with him.' There was no unfilialness toward Mary or Joseph in the reply which Jesus gave, but only a loving reminder of the relation which he bore to God and of the fact that the higher relation must rule his life." — *Rev. J. D. Freeman.* **Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?** Why have you been looking for me elsewhere? "Already there had come upon him the sense that he was set apart, the divine call had awakened his soul, and the consciousness that he was not as others had already begun to exercise its influence upon him." — *Margaret E. Sangster.* "This saying bespeaks a soul that lies like an unruffled lake in the beaming sunshine of the Father's face. It is as surprising in its frankness as it is marvellous in its fulness." — *Rev. John Clifford, D.D.*

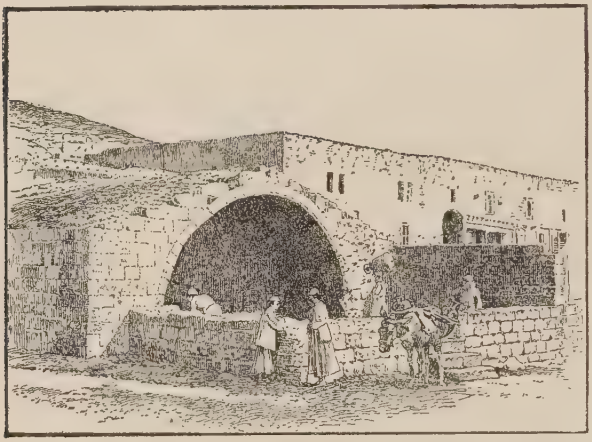
50. **And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.** They understood the words, of course, but not how they applied to himself. Joseph probably

51. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all *these* sayings in her heart.

52. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

never did understand that his son was the Messiah, and Mary only after the brooding thought of many years.

SUBJECT TO HIS PARENTS. 51. **And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth.** That hidden, lovely, and peaceful village was an ideal place for the rearing of such a boy. "Down" is used of all journeys away from Jerusalem, both because it was on high ground and because it was the chief city of Palestine. **And he was subject unto them.** Though he knew himself to be the Son of God, and so immeasurably above them in his nature, powers, and origin. We learn from Mark 6 : 3 that he practised Joseph's trade of a carpenter, and doubtless was the support of Mary and his brothers and sisters. He lived a life of toil, but he was no pauper. In his humility he obeyed his mother's orders, and she never rebuked him for self-assertion. We may be sure also that she never asked him to do anything except what was right and best. **And his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.** This showed her greatness of soul, her likeness to her Son. "There may be exceptions, but so far as I have ever been able to read the world, no truly great man has ever lived who did not have a great mother." — *Rev. Len G. Broughton, D.D.*



Fountain of the Virgin. Nazareth. From a photograph.

52. **And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature.** He, though divine, was subject to the laws of physical and mental growth as an ordinary boy, thus proving his perfect humanity. **And in favor with God and men.** "He lived as ordinary Jewish boys lived, learned their lessons in the law, submitted to the strict rules which bound them day by day, helped in the labors of the home and the shop, made no claims for himself beyond others, but lived the life of simple duty and modest charity. May we not say that is why he grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man?" — *Canon Glazebrook.* "During some thirty years this educational process was going on; and if, during that period, the outward life of Jesus seems barren of results, inwardly it was certainly fruitful. Externally it may have been as the winter's snow, but beneath the snow blossoms and flowers were making ready for the spring." — *George C. Lorimer.*

THE FIRST MIRACLE. On the occasion of Christ's first miracle Mary is prominent. It was at Cana of Galilee, probably a little town six or seven miles northeast of Nazareth, so that Mary would have friends there, or perhaps she moved there after the death of Joseph; which probably occurred before this time, as he is no more mentioned. It was a wedding feast, and Mary was aiding in the conduct of the affair. The wine ran out, for such feasts were prolonged, and this happening was considered a disgrace on such an occasion. Mary told Jesus, which shows that since the death of Joseph she had come to rely on her oldest son. The answer of Jesus seems harsh to us, but would not seem harsh to a hearer of that time. "Woman" means no more than "Lady" — it was not a rude form of address. "What have I to do with thee?" translates a difficult idiom more harshly than is necessary, though Jesus certainly told his mother that he would wait his own time and was not to be

hurried. That Mary was not offended is shown by her command to the servants that they should do whatever Jesus bade them — a confidence justified by the gracious miracle which followed.

" Jesus clearly implies, though with no unkindness of manner, that he cannot permit his course to be directed by any influence short of the divine — not even his mother's. Think what that must have meant to Mary. She was losing her Son. It is one of the difficulties of parents to discover that the authority they are accustomed to exert over their children cannot be maintained forever. But in the case before us the shock was the stronger for the perfect obedience which Jesus had shown in his boyhood." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.* Mary's Son was obliged to leave her for his great work, into which she could not follow him.

The Marriage in Cana.

" WHO IS MY MOTHER ? " " On another occasion Mary emerges from obscurity and is reported to be standing with the brethren of Jesus outside the synagogue and on the edge of a great hostile multitude. A messenger runs in telling Jesus that his mother and his brethren desire to speak with him and beg that he will come. Here for Mary was a definite parting of the ways. Her Son was in danger, she wanted him to give up his work in which he was continually threatened, and it is more than doubtful if she did more than love him at this time. She could love him as mothers do, but could not shield him nor altogether understand him, and so, long before Calvary, when she shared the anguish of his cross, the cross threw its shadow over her. Her Son did not come to her. The narrow boundaries of the home could no longer confine him. He was pledged to the mission for which he had been sent into the world. Mary was to him still his mother, but she was not to divert him from the greatness of his task. ' Who is my mother and who are my brethren ? ' he said ; and, looking on the multitude, declared that here in them were his real kindred." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

III. **MARY AT THE CROSS**, John 19 : 25–27. MARY'S GRIEF AT CALVARY. " Among the figures that are discernible watching round the cross, is there any other of such poignant pathos as that of Mary ? For any mother to watch any son of hers so die is torment enough ; but what was it to *this* mother, with her sacred and ineffable memories of the holy mystery of his birth, to see *that* Son in the hands of wicked men, ending in shame and pain the life that was to have saved the world ? Is it wonderful that amid the tortures of the cross Jesus' eye fell on his mother, and he had a special word of care for her ? " — *Rev. P. Carnegie Simpson.*

Mary's sister was standing with her by the cross ; it is likely that her name was Salome (Mark 15 : 40) and that she was the mother of John the apostle, who was

therefore Mary's nephew and the cousin of Jesus. John also was standing near, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He was probably supporting Mary and comforting her in her anguish. As the dying Jesus saw the pair he uttered those beautiful words, — to Mary, "Behold thy son"; and to John, "Behold thy mother." "From that hour," John wrote, "that disciple took her unto his own home" — either immediately, or after the death of Christ had occurred.

Plockhorst.

Jesus and His Mother.

It is likely that John was a man of means. We judge this from the fact that he was known to the high priest (John 18 : 15) and also from the fact that his family had hired servants (Mark 1 : 20). John was able therefore to provide comfortably for Mary during the rest of her life.

MARY'S LIFE AFTER THE RESURRECTION. That the risen Jesus showed himself to his mother and in an instant transformed her sorrow to joy, who can doubt? We can think of her as joining in the assemblies of the early church in the upper room in Jerusalem, and rejoicing in the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. She would know of Peter's imprisonment and release, of the martyrdom of Stephen and James. Paul would meet her after his conversion, and would have long talks with her concerning Jesus. Perhaps she even lived long enough to go with John to his church in Ephesus, and witness the beginnings of Christianity in the heathen world.

All this, however, is conjecture. We can only be sure that Mary was most tenderly cared for during the remainder of her life, and that she was deeply revered and greatly beloved by all that knew her.

MARY'S CHARACTER. "One can hardly fail to be impressed, in studying Mary's character, with her quietness of spirit; her meditative inwardness of disposition; her admirable self-control; her devout and gracious gift of sacred silence. The story of her life and of her relationship to Jesus is consistent throughout and touched with manifold unconscious traits of truth. Such a narrative could not have been feigned or fabled." — *Prof. Louis M. Sweet.*

Of course we are not to worship Mary. She was the human channel through which Deity came into the world, but she remained merely human, herself sinful like the rest of mankind, and needing to be saved by Jesus Christ. The scanty references to her in the New Testament make this very plain. The writers of the New Testament would have been shocked if they could have foreseen the Mariolatry that would arise.

But the character of Mary is one of the sweetest and finest imaginable. She was a saint. She was humble, trusting, obedient, loving, self-sacrificing. In her study for three decades of the world's Redeemer and her long brooding over his deeds and words, in her knowledge of him and faith in him, she may well be called the first Christian. And in all this she is a lovely example for Christians to the end of time.

"And if our faith had given us nothing more
Than this example of all womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before."
— *Longfellow's "Golden Legend."*

## LESSON III (16). — July 15.

**SIMON PETER.** — John 1:35–42; Matthew 4:18–22; 14:28–31; 16:13–18, 21–23; 17:1–13; Luke 5:1–10; 22:31–34, 54–62; John 18:10, 11; 20:1–10; 21:1–23; Acts 2:1—5:42; 8:14–25; 9:32—12:19; 15:7–11; Gal. 2:1–11.

(Survey of Simon Peter's Life.)

**PRINT Matt. 16:13–18, 21–23; John 21:15–17.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.* — JOHN 21:17.

**Devotional Reading:** 1 Pet. 2:1–10.
**Reference Material:** 1 and 2 Peter.
**Primary Topic:** PETER, THE HELPER OF JESUS.
**Lesson Material:** John 21:1–17. Print verses 15–17.
**Memory Verse:** He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. John 21:15.
**Junior Topic:** THE LEADER OF THE TWELVE.
**Lesson Material:** Matt. 16:13–18; John 21:15–17.
**Memory Verse:** John 21:17.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic:** PETER'S FAILURES AND SUCCESSES.
**Topic for Young People and Adults:** PETER'S WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will study especially Christ's words to Peter beside the fire after his resurrection; but the teacher will bring out whatever the pupils can remember about the call of Peter, and such episodes as his walking on the sea, his confession of Christ, and his denial of his Lord. Make much of Christ's reference to his lambs, which means the little children.

**The Junior Classes** will emphasize Peter's confession of Christ, being led to think of the confession of him which they themselves should make. Go on to speak of typical scenes which bring out the character of the apostle, especially the denial, and close with the scene by the Sea of Galilee which restored Peter to the place he had lost.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes** may draw a wave line on pieces of paper, and write on the crests and in the troughs of the waves words indicating the events in which Peter showed at his best and at his worst.

**The Young People and Adults** may write essays or give talks on different aspects of Peter's character and works, such as those listed in the "Round Table."

St. Peter. Fra Bartolommeo.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The call of Peter, February, A.D. 27. The walking on the sea, April, A.D. 29. Peter's confession and the transfiguration, summer, A.D. 29. Peter's denial, early morning of Friday April 7, A.D. 30. Pentecost, Sunday, May 28, A.D. 30. Peter and Cornelius, A.D. 41. First church council, A.D. 50.

**Place.** — Peter's birthplace, Bethsaida, and later home, Capernaum, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. After the ascension his headquarters seem to have been Jerusalem.

Supposed Site of Bethsaida.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Examples of Peter's impulsiveness.
Peter the enterprising and courageous.
Peter the leader of men.
Peter the evangelist.
Peter the confessor.
Peter's conservatism.
Peter's miracles.
Peter's love and sternness.
Peter's writings.
Peter the preacher.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: Peter's Failures and Successes.**

I. PETER THE DISCIPLE, John 1:35–42; Matt. 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–10.

Simon becomes Peter.
Peter's haul of fishes.
Peter a fisher of men.

II. PETER THE CONFESSOR, Matt. 14:28–31; 16:13–18, 21–23; 17:1–13; John 18:10, 11: Luke 22:31–34, 54–62; John 20:1–10; 21:1–23.

Peter walks on the sea.
Peter's great confession.
Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration.
Peter's sword.
Peter's denial.
Peter at the tomb.
Peter's love for Christ.

III. PETER THE APOSTLE, Acts 2:1—5:42; 8:14–25; 9:32—12:19; 15:7–11; Gal. 2:1–11.

Peter at Pentecost.
Peter and the cripple.
Peter in court.
Peter and Ananias and Sapphira.
Peter in prison.
Peter and Simon the sorcerer.
Peter heals Æneas and Dorcas.
Peter and Cornelius.
Peter and the angel.
Peter in the church council.
Peter and Paul.
Peter's closing years.
Peter's character and work.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Peter, by Burne-Jones. Peter's Call, by Ghirlandajo. Peter's Confession of Christ, by Ghirlandajo. Peter's Denial, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. Christ's Admonition to Peter, by Raphael. Peter and John Healing the Lame Man, by Raphael. Peter Freed from Prison, by Raphael, Allston.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Davidson's *St. Peter and His Training.* Thomas's *The Apostle Peter: Outline Studies.* William M. Taylor's *Peter the Apostle.* Vance's *The College of Apostles.* Howson's *Studies in the Life of St. Peter.* Birks's *Life and Character of St. Peter.* Shorthouse's *The Making of Simon Peter.* Works on Bible characters by Whyte, Matheson, Wells, Adeney (in *Men of the New Testament*). Lives of Christ and commentaries on the Gospels, Acts, and Peter's Epistles. Longfellow's "The Sifting of Peter." "Peter" in the *Collected Poems* of Amos R. Wells. Macduff's *Footsteps of St. Peter.* Jones's *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.* F. B. Meyer's *Peter: Fisherman, Disciple, Apostle.* Hough's *The Men of the Gospels. St. Peter the Apostle of Asia,* by Auchincloss. Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord.*

---

I. **PETER THE DISCIPLE,** John 1:35–42; Matt. 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–10. SIMON PETER belonged to Bethsaida ("House of Fish"), a little fishing village not far from Capernaum on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee; but he removed to Capernaum, and this home, it is conjectured, Christ made his headquarters during his Galilean ministry.

*His Name,* Simon (or Symeon, meaning "Hearing") in Hebrew, was changed by Christ to Peter (Cephas in the Aramaic), which is Greek for *rock.*

*His Brother* was Andrew, the retiring but helpful disciple. His father was named Jonah (John). Peter was married, and his mother-in-law was healed by Christ of a great fever. We learn from Paul that his wife, when he labored as an apostle, went with him on his preaching tours.

*His Business* was that of fishing in the well-stocked waters of the Sea of Galilee, seining the fish with a large net, and so needing helpers. His partners were his brother Andrew, and the two sons of Zebedee, John and James. Though he was doubtless in comfortable circumstances, his daily toil was heavy and not without danger, and his body was inured to hardship.

Christ and the Fishermen. Zimmermann.

*His Age* can only be inferred, but it seems likely that he was the oldest of the twelve disciples, and their leader on this account as well as because of his enterprising and self-reliant nature.

SIMON BECOMES PETER. "Jesus and St. Peter met first in Judæa, at a distance from their own homes. St. Andrew and St. John were there as well as St. Peter. They appear to have been drawn thither by the preaching of John the Baptist. From this fact we learn that they were young men of high character and lofty aim." — *Rev. John Davidson.*

John the Baptist one day, as Jesus came in sight, pointed him out earnestly to Andrew and John as the long-expected Messiah ; and Andrew in great excitement went to bring to Jesus his brother Simon, who evidently shared Andrew's and John the Baptist's Messianic hopes. As soon as Jesus saw Simon he said, "Thou art Simon the son of John, thou shalt be called Cephas" (the Aramaic form of "Peter," Greek for "rock"). Thus Christ pierced to the strong rock-heart of Simon Peter, which lay beneath all his surface fluctuations, and began to build upon it. This was Peter's *first* call.

PETER'S HAUL OF FISHES. Peter did not regard this first conversation with Christ as a call to discipleship but went back with his friends to his work in Galilee. Here, some time later, Jesus found him, with his comrades, washing their nets after a hard night's work (the night is the best time for fishing in the lake) which had proved wholly fruitless. Borrowing their boat in order to get a little way from the shore and out of the pushing crowd, our Lord preached to them one of his wonderful sermons, and at the close he bade Peter row out and let down his net. After demurring — for what could this carpenter know about it ? — Peter obeyed, and the result was a tremendous catch which caused the two boats to begin to sink.

The fisherman was amazed. He felt himself in the presence of a supernatural being. The miracle was in his own familiar realm and came close home to him. He fell at Jesus' knees, — where in spirit he was to remain for the rest of his life, — confessed his sinfulness, and bade the holy miracle-worker leave his unholy presence. That is the first evidence of conversion, a realization of one's sinfulness and need of a Saviour.

PETER A FISHER OF MEN. Christ's response to Peter was the fisherman's *second call :* "Fear not ; follow me ; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Jesus does not take men away from their likings and from their natural occupations, but consecrates them, and glorifies them. Peter was to continue to be a fisher, but he was to catch men and not fish. The arts are not dissimilar. Both call for courage,

MATT. 16: 13. Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cæs-ă-rē'-à Phĭ-lĭp'-pī, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is?

14. And they said, Some *say* John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

---

and patience, and perseverance, and tact. And in fishing for men Peter needed the help of Christ, just as he needed it in his fishing for fish.

That was Peter's call to discipleship. His third call, the call to apostleship, came later when our Lord definitely chose his Twelve associates in the great work, and Peter, as always, heads the list. "Discipleship comes before apostleship. They who would teach others about the Lord must first be acquainted with him themselves." — *William M. Taylor.*

Notice how readily and gladly Peter heard and obeyed these three successive calls. He was a married man, with family responsibilities, but he trusted all that to Christ. He had his business to pursue, but he placed "his Father's business" first. Doubtless he loved his home, with its love and comforts; but he loved Christ more, and the work of the Kingdom. Later, his wife went with him as he preached and made missionary journeys. Their common task and their joy in it made one more tie between them, and the best of ties. Every minister, every missionary, every lifetime Christian worker, has to make Peter's choice. A happier choice cannot be made.

II. **PETER THE CONFESSOR**, Matt. 14: 28–31; 16: 13–18, 21–23; 17: 1–13; John 18: 10, 11; Luke 22: 31–34, 54–62; John 20: 1–10; 21: 1–23. PETER WALKS ON THE SEA. One of the most characteristic of Peter's experiences with the Master occurred after the feeding of the five thousand, when the twelve disciples were crossing back to the western side of the Sea of Galilee, were caught in one of the sudden and violent storms which trouble the low-lying, hot lake, and were in great peril. Jesus came to them in their danger and fear, walking on the water; and Peter shouted to him, asking to be given the same power of treading the waves. "Come," the Saviour called, and Peter also accomplished the stupendous miracle, a conquest of the law of gravitation. That was a proud moment in Peter's life.

But Peter was a wave-man, now up and now down; he was not yet a rock. So he faltered, when he felt himself going up and down on that unsteady floor, and as he lost faith he began to sink, so that he cried for help, and Jesus had to catch him, and hold him up, and lead his venturesome disciple to the boat. The happening was a parable of much of Peter's life.

"Peter was full of human nature. We are ever reading ourselves over in the story of his life. No man more human than he. In this he comes near to us and cheers us. His very frailties are great encouragements to all who fall. He was the epitome of our weaknesses, our aspirations, our falls, our hopes, our loves." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.*

PETER'S GREAT CONFESSION. The climax of Peter's whole life was his clear-cut testimony to the Messiahship and Deity of Jesus, in which he led the disciples, as always, and so led all the uncounted millions who since his time have made the good confession.

13. **Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi.** Jesus was at the most northerly point of his journeys, a few miles east of Dan, at the foot of Mount Hermon. Herod Philip rebuilt the city and called it after himself, to distinguish it from the Cæsarea on the coast of the Mediterranean, the seat of the Roman government, where Paul was afterward imprisoned. **He asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is?** Christ's favorite name for himself was "the Son of man," using a phrase by which Daniel had designated the Messiah. Christ was perfect man, representative man, the man who was to die for the sins of all men. His question was virtually this, "Do men regard me as the Messiah whom Daniel foretold in his prophecy of the Son of man?"

14. **And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah.** The people expected John to return and complete the work which Herod had cut short so untimely. They expected Elijah to return and prepare the way of the Messiah, according to Mal. 4: 5. **And others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.** Jeremiah is named as a representative prophet, perhaps because his book stands first in the Hebrew arrangement of the prophecies, following the books of Kings. Also it was a tradition that Jeremiah had hid in a cave the ark and other sacred objects which he had saved from

15. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am?

16. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bär-Jō′-năh: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.

18. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

---

Solomon's temple, and that he would return to restore them to the temple. The people at least perceived that Christ's utterances were full of true prophetic fervor and power, but they saw no deeper into his nature and design.

15. **He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am?** That was what Christ really wanted to know. He realized that the Pharisees, Sadducees, rulers of the Jews, were opposed to him, and that the common people, though they admired and loved him, had no conception of his great mission and of his Deity. Had his chosen twelve risen to this supreme thought of God's purpose in Christ?

16. **And Simon Peter answered and said.** Others of the disciples, especially John and James, may have had the same thought, but Peter was the spokesman, ready and bold, thoroughly knowing his own convictions and unfaltering in expressing them. Thus he won his glory and Christ's praise. **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** This was the answer for which Jesus longed. This gave him a basis for his church in Peter, at least, and in the other disciples if they were of Peter's mind. This is the heart-felt testimony which comes from every true follower of Christ: he is no mere man, not even the wisest, strongest, noblest of men; he is the Son of the living God.

17. **And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah.** "Simon the son of Jonah." "Bar," Aramaic for "son," appears in Bar-tholomew, Bar-timæus, Bar-nabas, Bar-abbas, etc. All insight into truth is blessed, and the higher the truth the greater the joy. **For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee.** "Flesh and blood" was a common Hebrew expression for "man." The general opinion regarding Christ, which had just been brought out, was proof that Peter's view of him did not come from men. **But my Father who is in heaven.** And who is also on earth, as was evidenced by his acting on the mind of Peter. The implication of this, of course, is that no credit belonged to Peter for discerning the truth regarding Christ, but only for leaving his mind open to the teachings of the divine mind.

18. **And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter.** Christ is not conferring that name upon Peter for the first time, but is merely reminding Peter and the other disciples of the meaning of the name which Christ had given him. **And upon this rock I will build my church.** "Thou art *Peter* and upon this *petron* (rock) will I build my church." When Christ spoke of his church he meant that he was establishing in the world an organization and not merely implanting doctrines. "On these words mainly rest the enormous pretensions of the Roman pontiff. It is therefore important (1) To remember that it is to Peter with the great confession on his lips that the words are spoken. The Godhead of Christ is the keystone of the Church, and Peter is for the moment the representative of the belief of that truth among men. (2) To take the words in reference: (*a*) To other passages of Scripture. The Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Eph. 2: 20, on Christ himself, 2 Cor. 3: 11. (*b*) To history; Peter is not an infallible repository of truth. He is rebuked by Paul for Judaizing. Nor does he hold a chief place among the apostles afterwards. It is James, not Peter, who presides at the council at Jerusalem. (*c*) To reason: for even if Peter had precedence over the other apostles, and if he was bishop of Rome, which is not historically certain, there is no proof that he had a right of conferring such precedence on his successors." — *Cambridge Bible*. **And the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.** Hades is the unseen world, the world of death. The gates or entrance is taken for the entire realm of death, which prevails over all things human, but which has no power over the undying kingdom of heaven.

The omitted verses 19, 20 depend for their understanding on certain Jewish customs of the times. When a scribe was admitted to his office he received a key, which was

21. From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.

22. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee.

23. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

---

a token that he was now able to open to scholars the treasures of divine truth. To Peter Christ promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that is, a knowledge of heavenly truth and the right to teach it to others. "Binding" and "loosing" were terms in common use as signifying the assertion that certain principles or laws were binding or not binding. "Gamaliel binds it," would mean, "Gamaliel declares it to be binding." Christ told Peter that he would be brought so close to the mind of God that his decisions on spiritual matters would be ratified in heaven. This verse 19 is interpreted falsely by Catholics as conferring infallibility upon the Pope.

Finally Christ bade his disciples keep to themselves the knowledge that he was the Messiah, since he knew that the multitudes would at once apply the assertion to secular affairs and insist that he become an earthly king and lead them in rebellion against the hated Romans. But he was the Prince of peace.

21. **From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem.** Hitherto, though he had made visits to the central city of the Jews, Christ's chief work had been in Galilee, where it would not be brought to an untimely end by the hostility of the rulers. **And suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes.** The elders were heads of clans; the chief priests were those who had been high priest or were the heads of the courses of priests; the scribes copied the law and taught it. Representatives of the three classes, to the number of seventy, made up the Sanhedrin, the chief council of the Jews. **And be killed, and the third day be raised up.** That was why Jesus would not allow his disciples to announce him as the Messiah: he foresaw that he must be not a world-conqueror by force of arms but a world-conqueror by force of sacrifice.

22. **And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.** Here we see the folly of Peter at its height — rebuking the Son of God, whom he had just confessed to be the Saviour of the world! But we do virtually the same thing when by our lives we scout Christ's well-understood wishes and plans for us. **Saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee.** The literal rendering of "Be it far from thee" — "May God pity thee" or "Pity thyself" — shows that Peter's rebuke arose partly from love and anxiety rather than wholly from conceit.

23. **But he turned, and said unto Peter.** This rebuke of Peter is enough of itself to overthrow the Roman Catholic exaltation of him. **Get thee behind me, Satan.** Peter was still a wave-man, up and down: a moment before, when he spoke the foundation truth of the church, he was a foundation stone; now, in speaking for the worldly view of the kingdom of heaven against the spiritual view, he is doing the work of the devil, and so has become for the time a Satan, a tempter to evil. **Thou art a stumbling-block unto me.** In the same way that Satan had been in the temptations at the beginning of Christ's ministry, by suggesting the easy possibility of earthly dominion, ease, and pride. **For thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.** Peter, with all his flashes of spiritual intuition, was still evidently worldly-minded; after Christ's death and resurrection he grew into heavenly-mindedness. This is the great transformation which we all need.

PETER ON THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION. Peter was in the inner circle of Christ's closest friends, with James and John. He enjoyed the best teaching of Christ's school. Those three alone were admitted to the raising of the daughter of Jairus, to the transfiguration, to Gethsemane, and no one knows how many other holy scenes.

The experience on Mount Hermon must have impressed Peter deeply. He saw the Lord more nearly in his Deity than he had appeared before or was to appear again till Paul met the glorious form on the Damascus Road. The shining face, the radiant garments, the august comrades from the past, the mysterious voice from the clouds

confirming what Peter had himself asserted a few hours before, all these events would have moved the slowest-witted man in the world, and Peter was of the quickest wit. And yet he had nothing better to propose than that he (not "*we*") should make little huts of boughs and branches in which Christ and Moses and Elijah might remain! Surely this was the best of evidence that Peter was still sense-bound.

PETER'S SWORD. When the soldiers came to carry Jesus off for his trial and crucifixion, any one who had followed the career of the impetuous disciple would know that Peter could not keep quiet. Indeed, he had his boasting to make good, for he had offered to lay down his life for Christ (John 13 : 37). Therefore he proceeded to make Christ's position doubly difficult and hazardous by drawing a sword which he had through a misunderstanding of Christ's words (Luke 22 : 38), and cutting off the right ear of Malchus, servant of the high priest who was to preside at Christ's trial! Our Lord never worked a miracle for himself, but he healed the ear immediately, for otherwise it would appear that he was a man of violence, and not the Prince of peace. Christ's rebuke of his rash disciple was calmly reasoned and was not angry, for he knew that the foolish deed was prompted by love.

The Denial of St. Peter.

PETER'S DENIAL. At the last supper the Lord had told Peter that Satan had asked for him, that he might sift him and carry him off as chaff (just as he had carried off Judas). Peter remembered the warning in after years (see 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9). But Christ told him that he had himself prayed for him, that his faith might hold out. And if our human intercession avails often to keep our brothers from falling, how much more Christ's! Yet Jesus continued to warn Peter that, in spite of his protestations of faithfulness to the death, the cock should not crow twice in the coming dawn before Peter should have denied his Lord thrice.

How this actually came about is one of the deepest tragedies of all time, especially as it is so clear a picture of what happens in many a life. Peter's love forced him to remain in the courtyard of the house of Annas and Caiaphas, that he might at least be near his Master in his trial, if he could not help him. But the disciple's love was not proof against the charges and the covert threats of the high priest's servants. There were whispers of the sword he had flourished with so bloody a result. "He was with him," it was asserted. "He's a Galilean too," another declared. Over and over, three times, with curses and swearing, Peter denied that he knew the Saviour. Then the cock crew, and Christ, led past by the mocking soldiers, turned and looked sadly at Peter. Are there more pathetic words in all Scripture than these, "Peter went out, and wept bitterly"? It was the darkest hour of Simon's life.

PETER AT THE TOMB. On Easter morning the light began to dawn for Peter. The first ray of the coming sunrise was the news which Mary Magdalene brought to him and to John, that the stone was rolled away from the tomb and that the body of Jesus was gone. In great excitement, both of them ran straightway to the empty

JOHN 21:15. So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16. He saith to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep.

17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me?

---

tomb. The younger, John, outran Peter; but characteristically it was Peter who first dared to enter the tomb. Then it was that the truth of the resurrection burst upon his despairing soul. Christ had so often stated it plainly that you would think he could not mistake, but he did, and they all did. What convinced him? Not the empty tomb, but the empty graveclothes, the cloths that had been wrapped around the sacred form, still lying there as if the body were in them; and the wrapping of the head, still rolled up apart as if the head were still in it. It was like a butterfly's chrysalis, with the butterfly escaped. Peter saw it, and believed.

PETER'S LOVE FOR CHRIST. Gradually the day dawned for Peter. There was the careful message from the angel, "Go, tell his disciples, *and Peter*." "Don't leave that out, the 'and Peter,'" Peter said to Mark, I think, when he was giving his reminiscences for the second Gospel. Then there was the appearance in the upper room, and the second appearance to convince Thomas, and before either of these visits to the disciples together there was, it seems, a special talk with Peter all by himself, which Paul knew about; probably Peter told him (1 Cor. 15:5). And then there was the never-to-be forgotten morning on the shore of Gennesaret.

How vivid the picture! The seven disciples, and Peter, still the leader, proposing an old-time fishing expedition. The long night of fruitless fishing, like the other memorable night nearly three years before. The fire on the shore and the shining figure standing by it. The clear, ringing voice giving directions for the wonderful catch. Peter's darting into the perception of who it was, his reverent putting on of his coat, his impulsive leap into the water and swim to the shore. He let the others drag the heavy net in, but when Jesus commanded for the fishes to be brought to the fire, it was he who drew the net to land. Then came the last breakfast, so joyful a sequel to the last supper; and then came Christ's memorable conversation with Peter.

15. **Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?** More than these other disciples love me. Peter had declared that *he* would never deny his Lord, though all the rest might do so (Matt. 26:33). Christ's question was therefore a pointed reminder of his unwarranted boast. **He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.** This answer shows a new Peter. He insists that he loves Christ, for he is sure of that, but he appeals to Christ's knowledge of his heart. He no more compares others with himself, to their disadvantage. And, whereas Christ had used for "love" a word that meant the love of the *mind*, Peter used for "love" a word that meant the love of the *heart*. **He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.** The word in the Greek means "little lambs," the least of the flock — and Peter had hoped for great things to do! But Christ knew that nothing is so great as to care for little children and feed them with the bread of life. Thus Peter was restored to his apostleship. "He had been called to the ministry by Jesus after a miraculous draught of fishes; it is after a similar draught that the ministry is restored to him. He had lost his office by a denial beside a fire of coal; it is beside a fire of coal that he recovers it." — *Godet.*

16. **He saith to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?** Once more Christ used the colder, more sedate word for "love," but he omitted the sharp words, "more than these." **He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.** Again, humbly, Peter expresses his personal affection, using the same word for "love" — the affection of the heart. **He saith unto him, Tend my sheep.** Christ used a different word for "feed," a broader word, and he promoted Peter from the lambs to the sheep. Peter was showing himself fitted for wider tasks.

17. **He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?** This time Christ uses Peter's word for "love," the word implying warm human affection, and thus takes his erring disciple back to his heart. Could any one have invented

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

all these little touches? Must not John have written here most faithfully just what he heard? **Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?** Peter had denied Christ thrice, and thrice he must affirm his love for Christ. **And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.** Peter used two words for "know" in this answer: the first "refers to Christ's spiritual intuition, the second to his experience and discernment." — *Cambridge Bible.* In both these ways Peter's love might be known to Christ. **Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.** A possible reading of the preceding verse in the Greek would make it a diminutive, "little sheep," and here "full-grown sheep," thus marking a threefold progression in Peter's return to Christ's favor.

This remarkable conversation closed with Christ's prediction of the death by crucifixion which Peter was to suffer, and the long life which John was to live, both of which prophecies John saw fulfilled.

III. **PETER THE APOSTLE,** Acts 2 : 1—5 : 42; 8 : 14–25; 9 : 32—12 : 19; 15 : 7–11; Gal. 2 : 1–11. PETER AT PENTECOST. When we close the Gospels and enter upon the Acts we find Peter still the leader of the apostles, the acknowledged head of the early church. This is shown immediately after the descent of the Holy Spirit in Peter's sermon, which shows — as we might have known by his confession of Christ as the Messiah before the crucifixion — that Peter had long pondered the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfilment in Jesus. The fisherman preacher proved himself to be the greatest of evangelists, for that one sermon added to the church in one day about three thousand souls, followed by others "day by day" — a lasting effect.

Julius von Schnorr.

Peter Cures a Lame Man.

PETER AND THE CRIPPLE. It was Peter who first — so far as the record shows — made the stupendous leap of faith required to work miracles. He had walked on the waves in imitation of Christ; he remembered his Master's promise that his disciples should do greater miracles than their Lord had done; now, in the name of Christ, he began to heal the sick with a word. The wonderful cure of the cripple by the Beautiful Gate of the temple was probably not the first miracle of healing which Peter wrought (see Acts 2 : 43), but it aroused most attention, and Peter made it the occasion for a spirited sermon on the one great theme, the work of the crucified Redeemer.

PETER IN COURT. This sermon of Peter's, with the throng which the miracle brought together, led to the arrest of the apostles and their trial before the Sanhedrin. Here again Peter was the spokesman, setting forth courageously the Messiahship of Jesus, whose power alone had healed the cripple who was there to give evidence. He even dared to condemn the Sanhedrin in the stern words, "Jesus Christ of Nazareth, *whom ye crucified.*" John, the Son of Thunder, spoke with equal boldness, and the Sanhedrin was compelled to let them go with the command to teach no longer in the name of Jesus, a command which Peter and John assured them they would disobey.

Verily a different Peter from the craven coward by the fire in the high priest's court-yard!

PETER AND ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA. The part played by Peter in the death of Ananias and Sapphira was that of a stern and just rebuker. The execution of those two wicked persons was the work of the Holy Spirit against whom they had so greatly sinned. It is to be noted that Peter no longer speaks of what he has done or will do, but ascribes all to God.

PETER IN PRISON. The new teachings grew rapidly in influence, and no wonder. The sick were even brought into the streets, that the shadow of Peter as he passed might fall upon them and heal them. The Sanhedrin became mad with jealousy, and put Peter and the other apostles into prison. But an angel freed them and bade them go and preach in the temple, which they were eager to do. Once more they were brought before the Sanhedrin, and Peter led their bold defiance of the authorities. The wise advice of Gamaliel saved them from further imprisonment, but they were brutally beaten — Peter's first experience of suffering for his Saviour.

PETER AND SIMON THE SORCERER. We next find Peter in Samaria, following up the good work of Philip, and rebuking one of his converts, Simon the Sorcerer, who offered to buy with money the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter's wrath and indignation were so terrible that Simon begged for his prayers of intercession with God, that he might not be punished for his sin. It is a stirring glimpse of the power that resided in the old fisherman-apostle.

The Vision of Peter. Julius von Schnorr.

PETER HEALS ÆNEAS AND DORCAS. With the healing of the palsied Æneas and the raising of Dorcas from the dead we turn again to the gentler side of Peter, and we see that he had become able, in Christ's strength, to accomplish the supreme resurrection miracle. Thus every obedient Christian goes on from the use of one power to a greater power.

PETER AND CORNELIUS. The conversion of Saul had occurred, and that great apostle was ready for the final enlargement of the church of Christ, the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles. Peter, with his stout Jewish prejudices, would have opposed this naturally, but his vision was enlarged by the episode of the noble Roman centurion, Cornelius. Such miracles as those of Æneas and Dorcas had opened the centurion's eyes and convinced him of the truth of Christianity. With him to perceive a truth was to act upon it, and to Peter was given the honor of reaping the first harvest of the Gentiles.

PETER AND THE ANGEL. Soon came the first break in the trio, Peter, James, and John, who had been closest to Jesus, and the martyrdom of James must have been a great shock to Peter. Not content with that murder, Herod Agrippa I. proceeded to put Peter into prison, intending to execute him also after the Passover. Those were anxious days for the church. Unceasing prayer was offered up for their leader. The prayers were heard, and an angel struck off Peter's chains and led him out of the prison. The scene at the home of Mary the mother of Mark was a striking one — the prayers and sobs of the meeting, the sudden knock at the door, Rhoda's hesitancy,

Peter's impetuous hammering, and the glad reception given him by his friends. Probably Peter had many similar experiences.

PETER IN THE CHURCH COUNCIL. At the first church council Peter virtually introduced his successor, and vouched for him. By reminding the brethren of his wonderful experience in the matter of Cornelius, Peter paved the way for their acknowledgment of Paul's great mission to the Greek and Roman world. It was not an easy thing to do, but Peter did it thoroughly, as he did everything, and in God's providence that speech proved to be the most far-reaching act of his life. From that moment Paul and his career are central in the Acts of the Apostles, and Peter disappears from the history of the early church.

PETER AND PAUL. Paul, after his conversion and stay in Arabia, went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and spent fifteen days with him (Gal. 1 : 18). Again, fourteen years later, he had another consultation with Peter in Jerusalem, resulting in complete agreement concerning his great work for the Gentiles (Gal. 2 : 1–10). Later (Gal. 2 : 11–21) Peter went to Antioch, probably to thank the Christians there for their gift to the Jerusalem poor, and during this visit he and Paul had a serious disagreement regarding association with the Gentiles. It is uncertain whether this took place before or after the first church council at Jerusalem, but a study of Peter's Epistles shows the strong influence of Paul upon Peter's thinking, and we cannot doubt that the two great leaders of the church came into complete accord.

PETER'S CLOSING YEARS. After Peter's meeting with Paul at Antioch, we hear of him "possibly at Corinth (1 Cor. 1 : 12), certainly in the far east at Babylon (1 Pet. 5 : 13), and certainly as prosecuting his work through missionary journeys, taking his wife with him (1 Cor. 9 : 5). Finally, we know that he glorified God by a martyr's death (John 21 : 19)." — *B. B. Warfield.* He wrote two noble Epistles, filled with the spirit of Christian humility. It is the tradition (though there is much reason to doubt it) that his martydom was at Rome, under Nero ; and "it is said that at his own desire he was crucified head downward, feeling himself unworthy to resemble his Master in his death." — *Rev. James M. Gray, D.D.*

PETER'S CHARACTER AND WORK. "Like Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress* Peter comes near to us in his failings." — *Principal W. F. Adeney.*

"Amid all Peter's stumbles and falls this always set him on his feet again — his absolutely enthusiastic love and adoration for his Master." — *Alexander Whyte.*

"The very self-confidence which betrayed Peter into rash ventures and made him too forward was the element which helped to produce the coming leader." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

"Peter was the man of quicksand who became the man of rock." — *Rev. Lynn Harold Hough.*

"I get from Simon Peter's history a new and subduing idea of the forgiving grace of Christ." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

"No character in Scripture history, we may even say in all literature, is drawn for us more clearly or strongly than Peter's. In the Gospels, in the Acts, and in the Epistles it is the same man that stands out before us in dramatic distinctness. Always eager, ardent, impulsive, he is preëminently the man of action in the apostolic circle, and exhibits the defects of his qualities as well as their excellencies throughout life. His virtues and faults had their common root in his enthusiastic disposition ; it is to his praise that along with the weed of rash haste, there grew more strongly into his life the fair plant of burning love and ready reception of truth. The life of Peter is peculiarly rich in instruction, warning, and comfort for the Christian, and his writings touch the very depths of Christian experience and soar to the utmost heights of Christian hope." — *Prof. B. B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.*

"Now he walked on the angry wave,
Now he sank in the watery grave;
Now he rose in triumphant faith,
Now he fell toward threatening death,
Peter, the wave man.

. . . . .

"Rough old fisherman brotherly dear,
Near to my weakness, very near,
Far from your folly I would flee,
Brave with your boldness I would be
Peter, a rock man!" — *Amos R. Wells.*

## LESSON IV (17). — July 22.

## JOHN THE APOSTLE. — Mark 1:16-20; 3:17; Luke 9:49-56; John 13:21-25; 19:25-27; 21:20-23; Acts 4:13-20; 1 John 4:7, 8; Rev. 1:9.

(Survey of the Life of John the Apostle.)

**PRINT Luke 9:49-56; John 19:25-27; 1 John 4:7, 8.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.* — 1 JOHN 4:16.

**Devotional Reading**: 1 John 4:11-21.
**Reference Material**: 1 and 2 and 3 John.
**Primary Topic**: THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED.
**Lesson Material**: John 13:21-25; 19:25-27.
**Memory Verse**: We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19.
**Junior Topic**: JOHN, THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.
**Lesson Material**: Luke 9:49-56; John 13:23; 19:25-27; Acts 4:18-20. Print Luke 9:49-56; John 19:25-27; 1 John 4:7, 8.
**Memory Verse**: 1 John 4:7.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: JOHN, THE BOSOM-FRIEND OF JESUS.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: A CHARACTER STUDY OF JOHN.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** have assigned to them the picture of John reclining closest to Jesus at the Last Supper, and receiving from Jesus on the cross the care of his mother. These are lovely pictures, which should be made so vivid that they will always remain with the children.

**The Junior Classes** take a larger view of John's life, adding the episode of the Samaritan village and John's defiance of the Sanhedrin, to get an idea of John's power as well as of his love. Set up both of these for the emulation of the boys and girls.

**The Older Classes** will review all that is said in the New Testament about John, and a most valuable exercise is to imagine John's impressions and actions in connection with other scenes in Christ's life at which he was almost certainly present, though not named in the account. For instance, when the roof was broken up over Christ's head to let down the palsied man, did not John reach up to shield Jesus from the falling bits of tile?

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The call of John, February, A.D. 27. The repulse in the Samaritan village, November or December, A.D. 29. The crucifixion, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — John's home in Jerusalem. The Sea of Galilee. Ephesus. The island of Patmos.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved.**

I. JOHN THE DISCIPLE, Mark 1:16-20; 3:17; Luke 9:49-56; John 13:21-25.
- The call.
- Demons and Samaritans.
- Witnessing wonders.
- At the Last Supper.
- At Gethsemane.

II. JOHN THE APOSTLE, John 19:25-7; 21:20-23; Acts 4:13-20.
- At the cross.
- By the Sea of Galilee.
- Before the Sanhedrin.

III. JOHN THE REVEALER, 1 John 4:7, 8; Rev. 1:9.
- At Ephesus.
- On Patmos.
- John's character and work.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

- John contrasted with Peter.
- John's authorship of the Fourth Gospel.
- John's reticence regarding himself.
- Points of likeness between John and Christ.
- Characteristics of John.
- Characteristics of John's writings.

### THE LESSON IN ART.

Scenes in the life of John, by Giotto. John the Evangelist, by Van Eyck, Burne-Jones. The Call of John, by Basaiti. John Healing the Lame Man, by Raphael.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Stalker's *The Two St. Johns.* Jones's *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.* Vance's *The College of Apostles.* Hough's *The Men of the Gospels.* Milligan in *The Men of the New Testament.* Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord.* Providence (R. I.) *Addresses on the Gospel of St. John.* George's *The Twelve.* Hayes's *John and His Writings.* Culross's *John, "Whom Jesus Loved."* *Commentaries* on the writings of St. John. *Lives of Christ.*

LUKE 9:49. And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50. But Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against you is for you.

I. **JOHN THE DISCIPLE**, Mark 1:16–20; 3:17; Luke 9:49–56; John 13:21–25. *The Father* of John the Apostle was Zebedee, a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, a man of some degree of wealth.

*The Mother* was Salome, who was probably the sister of Mary, the mother of our Lord. This Salome followed Jesus and ministered to him (Mark 15:40, 41), and was one of the little group of sorrowing women at the foot of the cross (Mark 16:1). In a mood of holy ambition (some would say of mistaken and too-daring ambition), she asked Jesus to place her two sons, James and John, on either side of his throne when he should come into his kingdom (Matt. 20:20 ff.). She was evidently a woman of deep religious fervor, and no wonder her sons were men of faith and of spiritual power.

Thorwaldsen.
St. John.

THE CALL. John's ardent temperament and deep spirituality brought him to the wilderness of Judæa when he heard of the preaching of John the Baptist, and made him a disciple of that great leader. When the Baptist pointed out Jesus as the long-expected Messiah, John followed Jesus, abiding at the house where Jesus lodged, and bringing his brother James to share Christ's teachings with him. They probably all went back to Galilee together, and it was there, after a wonderful draught of fishes which followed Christ's command to let down the nets, that John with his associates formally and finally joined themselves to Christ's company, becoming the nucleus of the Twelve that was soon filled out. Here was no "kicking against the pricks" as in the case of Paul, but as soon as John saw the living Truth he became an earnest and grateful disciple.

DEMONS AND SAMARITANS. John and James were called Boanerges, "sons of thunder." We get few glimpses in the Gospels of the fierce and impetuous side of their nature, and think of them as gentle and mild at all times, and rather of Peter as a son of thunder. But on one occasion, of which we are told, this phase of their characters is manifest. The incident occurred in Galilee, near the end of Christ's great ministry there.

LUKE 9:49. **And John answered and said.** John's remark was probably suggested by Christ's saying (verse 48) that whoever received a little child "in his name" received him. John would show how zealous he had been for Christ's name. **Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name.** The Jews often used exorcisms, having faith in the power of forms of words. John does not deny that the man referred to had thus used Christ's name effectively; he must therefore have had a measure of faith. **And we forbade him, because he followed not with us.** He had not joined himself outwardly to the body of Christ's disciples. With John it was all or nothing. There is a tradition that once he rushed out of a bath because he saw there Cerinthus, a heretic.

50. **But Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not.** Jesus did not say, "Commend him"; he wanted men to follow him; but he urged that the man be allowed to use

51. And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52. And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Să-măr'-ĭ-tănṣ, to make ready for him.

53. And they did not receive him, because his face was *as though he were* going to Jerusalem.

54. And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?

55. But he turned, and rebuked them.

56. And they went to another village.

---

the measure of faith he had, in the hope that by using it he might increase it. **For he that is not against you is for you.** In Matt. 12 : 30 we read, "He who is not with me is against me." These two assertions seem at first to contradict each other, but they do not, because they do not refer to the same kind of neutrality, or to neutrality at the same time. A man who says, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," may not be wholly with Christ yet, but is on the way; but the failure to be with Christ which results from careless indifference is often as hurtful to Christ's cause as open hostility. American and Italian neutrality at the opening of the World War became union with the Allies before the close of that great struggle.

51. **And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up.** The reference is to Christ's coming ascension, his reception again into heaven. **He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.** The purpose required stedfastness, for he realized to the full that trial and death awaited him there.

52. **And sent messengers before his face.** Some think that James and John were these messengers, and so were themselves rebuffed as well as their Master. **And they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.** Preparations for entertainment were necessary because Jesus was followed by the Twelve and by many other disciples, a heavy demand upon the resources of a small place.

53. **And they did not receive him.** The Samaritans were exercising that traditional hostility toward the Jews which caused many of the latter to travel between Galilee and Judæa by way of the country east rather than west of the Jordan. They were particularly hostile near the times of the great Jewish feasts, and, as Jesus now openly declared himself to be the Messiah, they would disavow even the friendship which had heretofore existed between them and him. **Because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem.** If he had been journeying to their own center of worship on Mount Gerizim, they would have welcomed him and his disciples with open arms.

54. **And when his disciples James and John saw this.** "What wonder that the Sons of Thunder wished to flash lightning?" — *St. Ambrose.* "But one of these very disciples (John) afterwards went to Samaria on a message of love (Acts 8 : 14–25)." — *Cambridge Bible.* **They said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?** Some of the most ancient manuscripts add, "even as Elijah did," referring to the incident of 2 Kings 1 : 10–12. The two apostles had recently seen Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, and this episode in his career would naturally come to mind and serve as an excuse for their unchristian thought of revenge for this slight put upon the Messiah. The words are omitted from the revised versions because they are omitted from the ancient manuscripts of perhaps the highest value.

55. **But he turned, and rebuked them.** Some ancient manuscripts (but not the most ancient) give the words of the rebuke, which are of so lofty a tone that they seem likely to be genuine: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them."

56. **And they went to another village.** There is a hint in the original that they went on to a Jewish and not a Samaritan village.

THROUGHOUT CHRIST'S MINISTRY. There is ample evidence that John was very close to Christ through all his ministry in Galilee, Judæa, and Peræa. Some aspects of Christ's work he has recorded with greater fulness than Matthew, Mark, or Luke, especially those phases of Christ's activities and addresses that illustrate the deepest things of the Spirit, — *e.g.* Christ's talk with Nicodemus about the new birth, his words about the resurrection at the grave of Lazarus, his sermon on the Bread of

JOHN 19 : 25. These things therefore the soldiers did. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clō′-păs, and Mary Măg-dă-lē′-nē.

life, and his words in the Upper Room. John was one of the inner circle, with Peter and James, and thus witnessed the raising from the dead of the daughter of Jaïrus and the inspiring scene of the transfiguration. He declared that even the world could not contain the books that might be written describing the deeds of Jesus which he had seen and the words of Jesus which he had heard. It was a wonderful experience, and no one was better fitted than John to record it and make good use of it.

AT THE LAST SUPPER. One of the most striking features of the world's greatest painting, Da Vinci's " Last Supper " at Milan, is the contrast between John and the traitor Judas. Jesus had just made the startling announcement that one of the inner circle, of his chosen Twelve, of his closest friends, was to betray him to his deadly foes. We are told that John, reclining at Jesus' right and therefore close to his breast as each rested on the left elbow, was nearest to the Master. Peter, therefore, lying a little further away, asked John to lean back and whisper to Jesus, inquiring who the traitor was to be. Then the Lord pointed out Judas by the sign of giving him a morsel of bread dipped in the Paschal broth, and the traitor went out to do his accursed deed. Thus were brought into sharp contrast, for the last time, the noblest and the most ignoble of the Twelve.

AT GETHSEMANE. Again, John was one of the three that were admitted to the deepest recesses of Gethsemane with the suffering Saviour ; but he does not, in his Gospel, describe Christ's agony in the Garden. Doubtless his loving pen was unequal to the sad task. Also, remembering that even the three most trusted and faithful disciples slept during the Redeemer's time of anguish, John must have felt ashamed to record the event.

II. **JOHN THE APOSTLE**, John 19 : 25–27 ; 21 : 20–23 ; Acts 4 : 13–20.

AT THE CROSS. John's account of the crucifixion is brief ; it must have torn his heart to write it. The feature in his account that is of most tender and especial interest is the story of Jesus and his mother.

JOHN 19 : 25. **These things therefore the soldiers did.** The four soldiers set to guard the cross. The clothes of executed prisoners were their perquisites, and they had just divided among themselves Christ's garments. **But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother.** Over against the four unsympathetic soldiers John sets four sympathetic and sorrowing women with the beloved disciple. " But " brings out the contrast. **And his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas.** The Greek, like the English, is here ambiguous, and leaves us in doubt whether " his mother's sister " was " Mary the wife of Clopas " or an unnamed woman. Probably " his mother's sister " was the Salome named by Mark in his account (Mark 15 : 40), and this Salome the mother of John, who was therefore Christ's first cousin according to the flesh. John's reticence in regard to his own

The Apostle John. Bida.

26. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son!

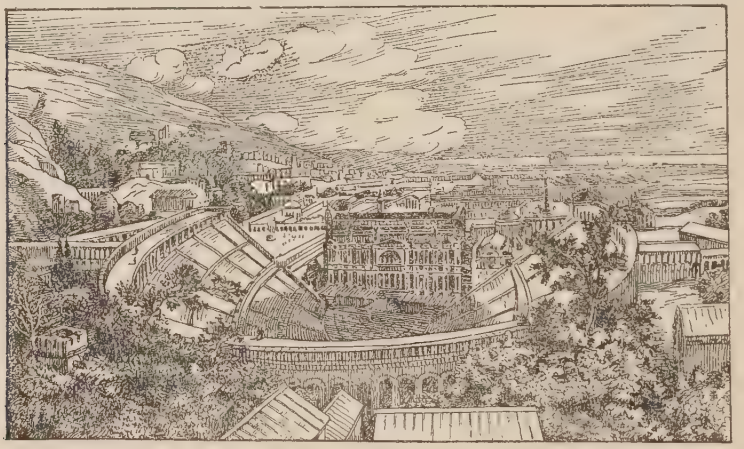
27. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own *home*.

---

name extends to his mother's and also to that of the Virgin Mary. If "Mary the wife of Clopas" were the sister of Christ's mother, there would be two Marys in one family, which is not likely. "Mary the wife of Clopas" was probably the mother of James the Less. **And Mary Magdalene.** This remarkable woman and devoted follower of Jesus is here introduced for the first time, and without any explanation, John taking for granted, as common knowledge, much that is in the first three Gospels, which were written long before his.

26. **When Jesus therefore saw his mother.** Possibly his physical sufferings had so dimmed his vision that he had not seen her before. **And the disciple standing by whom he loved.** John is not boasting in thus describing himself; he is merely indicating why Christ entrusted Mary to him. **He saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son!** "Woman" is not a slighting term but a term of honor, as we say "Lady."

27. **Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother!** Why did not Jesus expect his brothers to care for his mother? Perhaps they were not Mary's sons, but children of Joseph by a former marriage. At any rate, we are told (John 7 : 5) that they did not believe on Jesus as the Christ, though they came to believe after the resurrection,



Ancient Ephesus.

and Mary would be far happier with her nephew, who could enter so fully into the deepest experiences of her soul. **And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.** John seems to have had social standing in Jerusalem, being kin to the high priest (John 18 : 15). His father Zebedee had hired servants (Mark 1 : 20), and the family was evidently in comfortable circumstances. John was doubtless able to provide well for Mary for the rest of her life, while she gave him the motherly love and care which he would most value. Jesus could have left to his beloved disciple no more precious legacy.

BY THE SEA OF GALILEE. In the account of that beautiful morning scene by the Sea of Galilee, when the risen Lord repeated the miracle of the great catch of fishes which had preceded his call of his chief disciples, Peter is most prominent. He was always that, and on this occasion he was to be taken back openly into his Master's forgiveness. But all through the recital we feel John standing near, listening eagerly, his eyes fixed on his beloved Leader; and once, of necessity, he mentions himself, not by name — he never does that — but by the unmistakable indication of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and relates Christ's veiled prophecy that he is to out-

1 JOHN 4:7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God.
8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

live the other disciples. As the years rolled on, and first James, then Peter, and Paul, and Luke, and Matthew, and the rest passed away in turn, how often must those words have recurred to John's wondering memory!

BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. Peter is so prominent in the account of the early church given in the Acts that it is only by a few brief and incidental references that we can make out the almost equal courage, zeal, and prominence of John. But when the apostles are brought before the Sanhedrin, and Peter's bold defiance is set down, we are told that "when they (the Sanhedrin) saw the boldness of Peter *and John*, they marvelled." We are further told that John joined with Peter in the downright declaration that they must obey God rather than man, and keep right on preaching Jesus Christ.

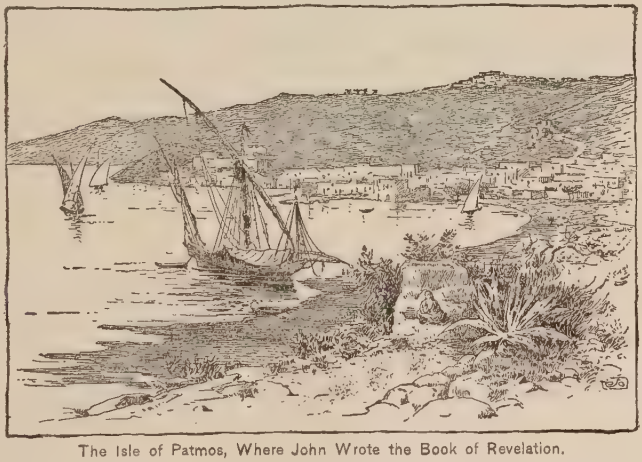
III. **JOHN THE REVEALER**, 1 John 4:7, 8; Rev. 1:9. AT EPHESUS. Next to the Fourth Gospel — and some place it even higher in their affections — John's first Epistle is one of the most beloved books in the world. It was written in John's old age as a message to his church in Ephesus and to the surrounding churches.

"The First Epistle of St. John has an interest which is unique. In all probability it contains the last exhortations of that apostle to the church of Christ. And as he long outlived all the rest of the apostles, and as this Epistle was written near the end of his long life, we may regard it as the farewell of the apostolic body to the whole company of believers who survived them or have been born since their time." — *Professor Plummer.*

The heart of the little book is in the following sentences.

1 JOHN 4:7. **Beloved, let us love one another.** John is urging mutual love among the Christians, but that leads on to the love of all men. This is John's great theme in all his writings: God's love to man — "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16) — and our love which should answer God's love.

*Illustration.* "Every one knows the beautiful story of St. John's farewell to the Ephesian brethren; how, too old to walk, he was borne in the arms of his disciples into the midst of their assembly, and repeated again and again the same saying, 'Little children, love one another.' And when asked why he said this, and nothing else, he replied, 'Because this is our Lord's command, and if you fulfil this, nothing else is needed.'" — *Prof. George Milligan, D.D.*



The Isle of Patmos, Where John Wrote the Book of Revelation.

**For love is of God.** John had already written (v. 6), "We are of God" and (v. 4) "Ye are of God"; now love is "of God" and therefore love should certainly be "of us." **And every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God.** The conclusion is irresistible: if all love comes from God, then so far as any one loves, whether he be Christian or heathen, a Peter or a Marcus Aurelius, he is born of God and has close fellowship with him, knows his inmost nature. This love is the basal League of Nations.

8. **He that loveth not knoweth not God.** The Greek is stronger: "never has

known God." To know God is to enter into sympathy with his spirit. Since that spirit is love, if we do not love we cannot know him. **For God is love.** John taught three things about God: that he is spirit (John 4 : 24), that he is light (1 John 1 : 5), and now that he is love. This corresponds to Paul's faith, hope, and love; and in each case love is the greatest. Note that John does not say that God is full of love, but that God *is* love, *all* love, love and nothing else. He is spiritual love, illuminating love, but above all a love that is close, warm, and living.

John's Old Age. The concluding words of John's Gospel are full of tender interest to us, they are so personal, so convincingly authentic, and seem to make us almost participants in the conversation between the risen Christ, and Peter and John. It was most natural that Peter, after Christ had foretold the tragic death he should die, should ask what was to be the fate of John. Christ's answer was a pointed rebuke and a majestic assertion of authority over human lives: "If I will that he remain on earth till I come again, what is that to you, Peter? Just obey my commands."

From this saying it was mistakenly rumored among the early Christians that John was not to die, but was perhaps to be translated like Elijah, an idea that must have grown stronger as one after another of the apostles passed away, while John lived on.

On Patmos. "In Jerusalem John is believed to have remained till the death of the Virgin Mary, loyally and lovingly fulfilling the charge which the Saviour had imposed on him with his dying breath. When released from this duty by her decease, he no doubt went forth like the other apostles to evangelize the world. There is, in one of the writings of St. Augustine, some shadow of a statement that he went to the Parthians. There is also a tradition of his being in Rome; and two well-known traditions are concerned with this supposed residence in the eternal city. It is told that during one of the persecutions he was cast into a caldron of boiling oil, but came out unharmed; and it is also affirmed that he was given to drink a poisoned cup, but when he drunk it no ill effect ensued, because the poison had taken itself away in the form of a serpent.

Carlo Dolci.

Vision of St. John on Patmos.
Pitti Gallery, Florence.

"Putting such traditions aside, we have satisfactory information that he appeared in Asia Minor, and the city with which the unanimous tradition of early times associates him is Ephesus. Ephesus contained a great population and was a place of enormous wealth and activity, but it was an extremely wicked city. Obviously this was a place where the gospel was urgently needed. St. Paul had not only established Christianity in Ephesus, but planted churches in the regions round about. We find St. John, in the opening chapters of the Book of Revelation, exercising a pastoral oversight not only over Ephesus, but also over the neighboring towns, evidently with a minute and sympathetic knowledge of the circumstances of every one of them." — *Principal James Stalker.*

We do not know when or why John was banished from Ephesus to the island of Patmos not far away, but the banishment was undoubtedly connected with his loyal preaching of Jesus Christ. It was there, as he tells us in the beginning of the Revelation, that he received a divine call to write.

*Illustration.* "Possibly in Ephesus St. John had been working so hard that he had little time to think and no time to write; but, when banished to this solitude, he

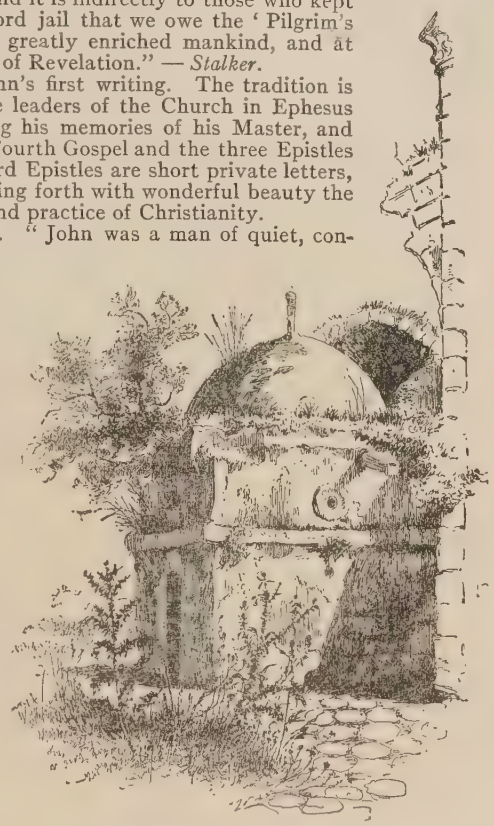
found ample leisure. So it was when Milton's public life was violently ended by the death of Cromwell, and his outward activity limited by his blindness, that he mused the greatest epic of the world ; and it is indirectly to those who kept Bunyan for twelve years in Bedford jail that we owe the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Prison literature has greatly enriched mankind, and at the head we must place the Book of Revelation." — *Stalker.*

This book was, seemingly, John's first writing. The tradition is that in the apostle's old age the leaders of the Church in Ephesus begged John to commit to writing his memories of his Master, and the result was the incomparable Fourth Gospel and the three Epistles of St. John. The second and third Epistles are short private letters, and the first is a brief treatise setting forth with wonderful beauty the leading ideas of John's teaching and practice of Christianity.

JOHN'S CHARACTER AND WORK. "John was a man of quiet, contemplative, mystical spirit. He was not the equal of Peter or his own brother James in practical energy and gifts of leadership, a consequence being that, as compared with them, he occupied a subordinate position among the Twelve. And yet, if I had my choice to-day, I would rather be John than either James or Peter. Peter and James were first *among the Twelve*, but John was first *in the affections of his Lord!*" — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

"John gives us the loftiest conception of the gospel. He goes higher than any other in his revelation of spiritual truth. It is John who narrates Christ's interview with Nicodemus, in which the mystery of the new birth is set forth. It is the same John also who gives us the doctrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.*

"When you think about Peter your emphasis is likely to be on Christian action; when you think about Paul your emphasis is likely to be on Christian thought ; when you meditate about John, Christian feeling, pure and lofty and sincere, begins to pour into your heart." — *Rev. Lynn Harold Hough, D.D.*



Reputed Tomb of St. John.

The Eagle, Symbol of St. John.

## LESSON V (18). — July 29.

## MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN. — Matthew 9:9–13; Luke 5:27–32.

**PRINT Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27, 28.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *I am not come to call the righteous but sinners.* — Luke 5:32.

**Devotional Reading:** Isa. 55:1–7.
**Reference Material:** Mark 2:13–22; and the Gospel of Matthew.
**Primary Topic:** Matthew Invites Jesus to His Home.
**Lesson Material:** Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27, 28.
**Memory Verse:** I am not come to call the righteous but sinners. Luke 5:32.
**Junior Topic:** What Jesus Did for Matthew.
**Lesson Material:** Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27, 28.
**Memory Verses:** Luke 5:31, 32.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic:** Matthew: Overcoming a Handicap.
**Topic for Young People and Adults:** Matthew: A Study of Conversion.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will study the entire lesson, getting some idea of what a publican did, and what a change was made in Matthew's life when he came over to the side of Jesus. The boys and girls are not publicans, but they also have bad things to give up for Christ's sake, and you will talk these things over with them. Show what a happy change this was for Matthew, and make vivid the joyful feast with which he began his new life.

**The Older Classes** will have an opportunity to do two things in this lesson: to discuss business methods in the light of Christianity, and to make very clear just what conversion is and why it is necessary. In the adult classes make a special effort to obtain the presence of business men and women. Close with a brief talk or essay on the character of Matthew's great work, the first Gospel.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Matthew's call came in May or June of A.D. 28.

**Place.** — Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

How Matthew illustrates conversion.
The business of a publican.
Other publicans in the New Testament.
Christ's message to men of business.
Feasts to which Christ was invited.
The character of Matthew's Gospel.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: Matthew: a Study of Conversion.**

I. Matthew's Call and Response, Matt. 9:9; Luke 5:27, 28.
The publican's cruel trade.
What Matthew's conversion involved.

Ruins of a Jewish Synagogue, near Capernaum.

II. MATTHEW'S GREAT FEAST, Matt. 9 : 10–13 ; Luke 5 : 29–32.
Matthew shows his loyalty.
The captious critics.
The noble reply.

III. MATTHEW'S WORK FOR CHRIST.
Traditions of his life and death.
His Gospel.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

The Call of Matthew, in the mosaics of St. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna; also in the Church of St. Maria (Ravenna), attributed to Giotto; also by Caravaggio (Rome), L. Caracci (Bologna), Jacopo Chimenti (Florence), Nicolas Moyaert (Brunswick), Salomon Koning (Berlin), Otto Voenius (Antwerp), Bida, Tissot. Matthew's Feast, by Veronese (Venice Academy).

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

George's *The Twelve.* Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord.* Milligan in *Men of the New Testament.* Jones's *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.* Vance's *The College of Apostles.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Matheson's *Representative Men of the New Testament.* Wells's *Bible Miniatures.* Bruce's *With Open Face.* Haweis's *The Story of the Four.* Lilley's *Four Apostles.* Rattenbury's *The Twelve. Lives of Christ. Introductions* to the various commentaries on the Gospel according to Matthew.

MATT. 9:9. And as Jesus passed by from thence, he saw a man, called Matthew, sitting at the place of toll: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

I. **MATTHEW'S CALL AND RESPONSE**, Matt. 9 : 9 ; Luke 5 : 27, 28. "The story of Matthew is an emphatic witness to the truth that the gospel is no respecter of persons, and that even in the selection of his more immediate followers Jesus thought not of anything in their outward surroundings, but simply and solely of their spiritual fitness for their new task." — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.*

MATT. 9 : 9. **And as Jesus passed by from thence.** We learn from Mark 2 : 13 that he was going from Capernaum, where he had healed the palsied man let down through the roof, and was on his way to the seashore through a suburb of fishers' huts with at least one custom-house, Matthew's. **He saw a man, called Matthew.** "Matthew" means "Gift of God," like "Theodore" and "Nathanael." Levi was Matthew's other name, "Matthew" being probably assumed when the publican became a Christian, as "Simon" became "Peter," and as "Saul" became "Paul" when he entered upon his mission to the Gentiles. It was common among the Jews to have more than one name ; for example, Abram and Abraham, Jacob and Israel. **Sitting at the place of toll.** Matthew was a tax-gatherer, taking toll from the fishers on the Sea of Galilee, and possibly from the merchants passing southward from Damascus through Capernaum. His was an abominable and universally detested occupation, giving opportunity for countless extortions, meannesses, injustices, and cruelties. He was an officer, not directly of the Romans, but of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, a prince who was half a Jew. We know from Matthew's Gospel what a keen student of the Old Testament he was, especially of all its Messianic hopes and promises. Perhaps he reconciled himself to his calling by expecting the Messiah to come from the family of the Herods ; but if so, his judgment was warped by his greed for gain.

Photograph by Wilson.
Ruins of a Synagogue at Tel Hum, Supposed Site of Capernaum.

"To become a publican in Palestine nineteen centuries ago a man had first of all to sell his *country*. The publican was the embodiment and representative of the foreign government. Dr. Johnson once defined a pensioner as a state hireling paid to betray his country. The Jew would have accepted that as a true definition of the

LUKE 5:27. And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Lĕ′-vī, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me.

publican. And to become a publican, in the second place, a man had to sell his *conscience*. The publican's trade was a dishonest trade. The fact that once in the history of the Empire a monument was raised to the memory of a man whose chief distinction it was that he had been an *honest* publican, only confirms the truth of the statement that, speaking generally, the publicans were a set of unscrupulous extortioners and thieves. Taxes to-day are fixed by responsible and representative bodies, and the tax-gatherer, as a result, can never exact more than is due. But taxes long ago were 'farmed.' The taxes of a town or district or province would be sold to the highest bidder, and that highest bidder would then be allowed to squeeze out of the people of his district what money he could. It was a system that encouraged corruption and extortion. The more the publican wrung out of the people, the quicker he grew rich. And so the publican lied and cheated and swindled; he smothered his conscience and hardened his heart, and grew fat and rich by extortion and false accusation." — *Rev. J. D. Jones, D.D.*

**And he saith unto him, Follow me.** We are hardly to suppose that this was the beginning of Christ's relations with Matthew. Certainly the publican had heard much about the wonderful deeds and equally wonderful words of the Carpenter of Nazareth; his calling put him in touch with many men, and he sat at the receipt of news as well as of taxes. He knew Jesus as a great teacher and miracle-worker, and also as a man who was kind even to the scorned publicans. Doubtless Matthew and Jesus had held some conversation together, and our Lord, with his marvellous reading of the human heart, perceived that the seed he had sown was ready to blossom and bear fruit. **And he arose, and followed him.** Matthew does not seem to have been a man of ready speech; not a word of his is reported in any of the Gospels. But he was better than that: he was a man of deeds. He shut his ledger, so crowded with figures that represented grasping greed and wickedness. He locked his booth, and left it forever.

Bida.

The Calling of Matthew.

LUKE 5:27. **And after these things he went forth.** Luke's account of the same event agrees with Matthew's in placing it immediately after the healing of the palsied man. Is it too much to imagine that the grateful man, as he went home "glorifying God," passed Matthew's booth on the way and shouted out to him the good news? **And beheld a publican.** Matthew in his account does not mention outright the despised business in which he was engaged; but in his list of the Twelve he pillories himself as "Matthew the publican." "Matthew the publican, like Paul the persecutor, Augustine the libertine, Bunyan the blasphemer, and many another sinner snatched as a brand from the burning, felt the impulse, when he became a Christian writer, to return to the penitent-form and remain there, uttering his confession in a phrase which will be read with wondering awe and adoring gratitude as long as the world lasts." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.* **Named Levi.** Matthew's first name, before his conversion. Mark calls him "Levi the son of Alphæus," and as James the Less, one of the twelve Apostles, was also the son of an Alphæus (Matt. 10:3), it is possible that he and Matthew were brothers. This, however, is not likely, since the known brothers are arranged together in the lists of the Twelve, and Matthew is in no list placed alongside James the Less. It is possible also that Alphæus was the same as Clopas (John 19:25) the husband of Mary, and that this Mary was the sister of the Virgin Mary, in which case not only John and James but also James the Less and Matthew were cousins of our Lord.

28. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him.

MATT. 9:10. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples.

11. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners?

---

28. **And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him.** Matthew modestly omits from his account the information that he forsook all to follow Jesus; and the "all" amounted to much, as we may know from his gainful occupation, and as we might have deduced from the account of the "great feast" which he gave. It was a very real conversion, proved by his deeds.

*Illustration.* "If we had to choose one out of all the books in the Bible for a prison or desert friend the Gospel according to Matthew would be the one we should keep. We do not enough think how much the leaving of the receipt of custom meant as a sign of the man's nature who was to leave us such a notable piece of literature. Matthew's call from receipt of custom Carpaccio, in his picture of the call of Matthew, takes for the symbol of the universal call to leave all that we have, and are doing. 'Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple.' For the other calls were easily obeyed in comparison of this. To leave one's often empty nets and nightly toil on sea, and become fishers of men, probably you might find pescatori enough on the Riva there, within a hundred paces of you, who would take the chance at once, if any gentle person offered it them. James and Jude — Christ's cousins — no thanks to them for following him; their own home conceivably no richer than his. Thomas and Philip, I suppose, somewhat thoughtful persons on spiritual matters, questioning of them long since; going out to hear St. John preach, and to see whom he had seen. But this man, busy in the place of business — engaged in the interests of foreign governments — suddenly the Messiah, passing by, says, 'Follow me!' and he rises up, gives him his hand. 'Yea! to the death'; and absconds from his desk in that electric manner on the instant, leaving his cash-box unlocked, and his books for whoso list to balance! — a very remarkable kind of person indeed, it seems to me." — *John Ruskin, in "St. Mark's Rest."*

"So Matthew left his golden gains,
At his great Master's call;
His soul the love of Christ constrains
Freely to give up all.
O Saviour! when prosperity
Makes this world hard to leave,
And all its pomps and vanity
Their meshes round us weave:
Oh, grant us grace that to thy call
We may obedient be;
And, cheerfully forsaking all,
May follow only thee." — *J. S. B. Monsell.*

II. **MATTHEW'S GREAT FEAST**, Matt. 9:10–13; Luke 5:29–32. In his gratitude and joy, and to make manifest to all men his change of heart and life, Matthew made a "great feast" for Jesus in his own house, which we may be sure was commodious and well furnished. It is Luke that tells us this; Matthew, with characteristic modesty, gives only a verse to himself.

MATT. 9:10. **And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in the house.** Jesus was no ascetic, but seems to have delighted in just such occasions of joyous festivity as this. **Many publicans and sinners came.** "A great multitude," says Luke. They flocked around Jesus partly because they were touched by his kindness to them. It was a new thing for a great teacher to be even aware of their existence, unless to condemn them. **And sat down with Jesus and his disciples.** Rather translate, "reclined (at the table) with them."

11. **And when the Pharisees saw it.** In Luke it is "the Pharisees and their scribes." These scribes were "the authorized teachers of the company present." — *Cambridge Bible.* According to the free-and-easy custom of the East (it is still the custom), they had entered without an invitation, and talked at will with the guests who were at the tables. **They said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners?** Luke reports that the scribes and Pharisees "mur-

12. But when he heard it, he said, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

13. But go ye and learn what *this* meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

mured against his disciples," and asked them why *they* ate and drank with publicans and sinners. The criticism was probably directed against both Jesus and his followers.

12. **But when he heard it.** He may have overheard the criticisms, or his disciples may have told him what the Pharisees and scribes were muttering. **He said, They that are whole have no need of a physician.** For " whole " Luke has " in health." By the " whole " Christ meant the Pharisees and scribes : they were far better men than the publicans and other sinners, at least so far as the upright course of their lives was concerned. Of course, as Christ has made the world understand, they were *not* " whole " when they indulged in pride and conceit and in scorn of their brothers, but were thereby dragged down even below the level of the publicans ; but still they thought that they, and they alone, had spiritual health. **But they that are sick.** The self-righteous Pharisees would not acknowledge that they needed Christ : why should he spend his time with them ? Repentant publicans like Matthew readily admitted that they were sick, and begged the Physician to cure them. Why should he not be with them ? It is the argument for association with sinners, if the association is for the one purpose of drawing them away from their sin.

13. **But go ye and learn what this meaneth.** Christ was talking to the learned scribes and the almost equally learned Pharisees. How angry they would be to be told by this carpenter's son to go and learn the meaning of a passage in the Bible ! **I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.** Christ quoted from the famous and beautiful verse, one of the greatest utterances of the Old Testament, Hos. 6 : 6. This verse was evidently a favorite of Christ's, see Matt. 12 : 7. Hosea was protesting against the empty formalism which made up most of the religion of his day ; the same formalism was relied upon by the scribes and Pharisees. They cared more for strict offerings of sacrifices, and for the other exteriors of religion, than for such matters as mercy and love which are the realities of religion, and which Christ was exemplifying in trying to uplift the publicans and sinners ; but what *they* cared for was not what *God* desired. **For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.** " Call to repentance " is Luke's fuller report of Christ's words. " I came " shows that Christ was conscious of his mission, and mindful of his origin. He came to all that need him, and the Pharisees needed him as much as the publicans ; yes, more. But their belief that *they* certainly needed no Saviour was a wall beyond which Christ could not pass to get at them.

III. **MATTHEW'S WORK FOR CHRIST.** TRADITIONS OF MATTHEW'S LIFE AND DEATH. " Traditions clash and contradict each other in relating to us the career of St. Matthew subsequent to the point at which Holy Writ loses him. The year in which he wrote his Gospel is held to tally with that of the apostolic evangelist's departure from Jerusalem to a wider field of missionary enterprise ; thus, on quitting his Jewish flock, he bequeathed to them in lieu of his actual presence the written Word of God. Like so many points of his life his death remains unascertained. One ancient authority is quoted in favor of his having died a natural death, and the antiquity of such a view lends it weight. A contrary tradition, widely adopted both by early and later writers, shows us our saint invested with the crown and palm-branch of martyrdom. In preparation for so glorious an end we mark him toiling to save the lost in Persia, Parthia, and other places ; and in barbarous regions making converts among the actual Anthropophagi. Persia, or Parthia, or Caramania then held in subjection by the latter country, is fixed upon as the scene of his violent death ; which some, again, assign to Ethiopia. Nor are legends unanimous as to the mode of his martyrdom. One avers that he was beheaded in requital for having warned Hyrtacus, King of Ethiopia, against contracting an unlawful marriage ; others relate that he died by fire ; or that a fire kindled around him being first extinguished by his prayers, he gave up the ghost in peace." — *Christina G. Rossetti.*

CHARACTERISTICS OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL. " When Matthew rose up and left all and followed the Lord, the only things he took with him out of his old occupation were his pen and ink. And it is well for us that he took that pen and ink with him, since he took it to such good purpose." — *Alexander Whyte.*

"After the record of his feast Matthew disappears from history; he is heard of no more in the New Testament. But in virtue of the Gospel which he was inspired to write, he is to-day one of the chief benefactors of the human race." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

It is the early and universal tradition that Matthew wrote his Gospel first of the four evangelists, and probably not many years after the ascension. He wrote it primarily for the Jewish converts to Christianity living in Palestine, and it is probable that he wrote it first in Hebrew (Aramaic) and later translated it into Greek; the Hebrew original has been lost.

Bida.

St Matthew Writing His Gospel.

Matthew's is the Gospel of the Kingdom. The main purpose of the first Gospel is to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, especially by comparing the facts of his life with the ancient Hebrew Messianic prophecies.

Matthew alone has preserved for us the fuller report of the Sermon on the Mount, and this is a priceless gift to the world. Ten parables are found only in the first Gospel, including those of the tares, the laborers in the vineyard, the ten virgins, and the talents. Matthew alone tells about the coming of the magi, and the flight into Egypt, about Peter's attempt to walk on the water, about the details of Judas's treachery and suicide, and numerous other matters, including many of Christ's most precious utterances.

"In his selection from the words of Christ Matthew's taste and Matthew's personality to some extent appear. In looking through the Sermon on the Mount with this point in view, I have been surprised to find in it so much about business. It clearly shows what kind of capitalist Matthew was under the influence of Christ. Matthew had made the great choice. If he had not, I do not see how he could have had the heart to write, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'" — *Edward Augustus George.*

"It could not have escaped the far-seeing discernment of our Lord that Matthew had literary gifts which in after years would render invaluable service to the great cause. So far as we know Jesus committed nothing to writing himself, but it was part of his divine wisdom to secure some men in his following who would take careful note of all that he said and did, and be able to write and preserve a careful account of the whole." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

"Matthew was the incarnation of conviction. This pronounced characteristic of Matthew's personality comes out in his life of Christ. Matthew's Gospel is almost blunt in its presentation of Christ's Messiahship. It is the production of a man who believed that Christ's claims were so strong as to admit of no questioning. He seizes on one great line of argument, the fulfilment of prophecy. His Gospel is intensely Jewish. He frequently quotes from the old Hebrew prophets. Indulging in no speculation, he refuses to be sidetracked by minor issues. He rings the changes on the fulfilment of prophetic Scripture. This is the indication of Christ's divinity, and it is complete." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.* Whoever makes a study of the prophecies as thorough as was Matthew's, and compares them as faithfully with the facts of Christ's life, will come to Matthew's conclusion, that Christ was the Son of God.

## LESSON VI (19). — August 5.

## MARY MAGDALENE. — Luke 8 : 1–3; Matthew 27 : 55, 56; John 19 : 25; 20 : 1–18.

**PRINT Luke 8 : 1–3; John 19 : 25; 20 : 11–18.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Our soul hath waited for Jehovah : He is our help and our shield.* — Ps. 33 : 20.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 40 : 1–8.
**Reference Material** : Mark 15 : 40—16 : 8; Luke 23 : 49—24 : 12.
**Primary Topic** : How Mary Magdalene Showed Her Love for Jesus.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 8 : 1–3; John 20 : 11–18.
**Memory Verse** : I have seen the Lord. John 20 : 18.
**Junior Topic** : How Mary Magdalene Showed Her Gratitude to Jesus.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 8 : 1–3; John 19 : 25; 20 : 11–18.
**Memory Verses** : Mark 16 : 9, 10.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : A Woman's Grateful Service.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Mary Magdalene Saved and Serving.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes**, of course, will not even discuss the theory that Mary Magdalene was the sinning woman at the house of Simon the Pharisee. They will find in the story of Mary a noble example of efficient and whole-hearted service, and will be taught to imitate her in using for Christ whatever possessions and abilities they have.

**The Older Classes** may review the reasons for regarding Mary as *not* being the sinful woman just before mentioned by Luke, but will make a little study of demon possession. Mary is a beautiful example of self-sacrificing love for Christ, and will be studied in that light. Adult classes will find a wonderful portrayal of Mary woven throughout Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of the World*, and one of the members may be appointed to review the poem.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The tour of Galilee in connection with which Mary Magdalene is mentioned took place in the autumn of A.D. 28, the second year of Christ's ministry. The crucifixion, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30; the resurrection, Sunday, April 9.

**Place.** — Magdala, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, and other towns and cities of Galilee. Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Was Mary Magdalene "the woman that was a sinner"?
The location of Magdala.
Demon-possession.
How Jesus and his disciples were supported in their work.
Christ's women friends.
Mary Magdalene compared with Mary of Bethany and the Virgin Mary.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Mary Magdalene Saved and Serving.**

I. Mary Helped, Luke 8 : 2.
- Demon-possession: what it was.
- Mary's wonderful cure.
- The demons that seize us.

II. Mary Helping, Luke 8 : 1–3; 24 : 1.
- Following Jesus.
- Ministering to Jesus.
- Gratitude and service.

III. Mary Sorrowing and Rejoicing, Matt. 27 : 55, 56; John 19 : 25; 20 : 1–18.
- The sad group on Calvary.
- The first appearance of the risen Christ.
- Mary an example to us.

### THE LESSON IN ART.

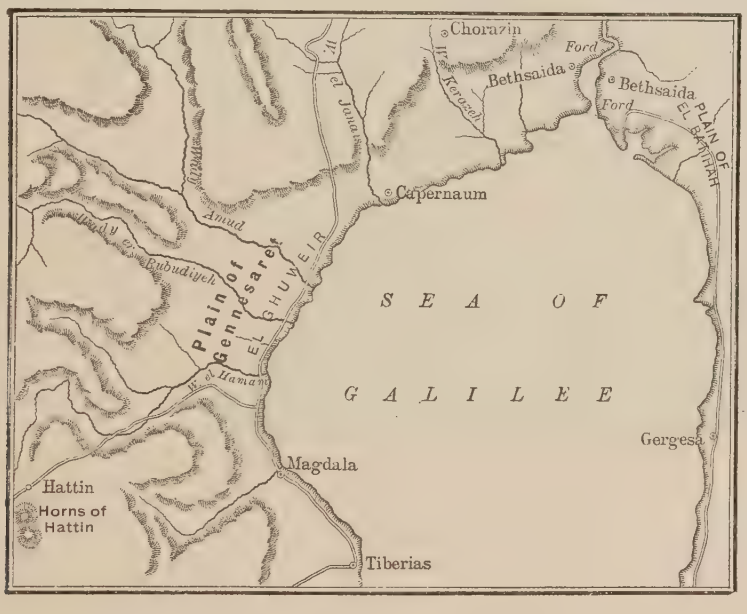
Paintings of Mary Magdalene, or of Mary and Christ, by Donatello (Florence), Fra Angelico (Florence), Lorenzo di Credi (Florence and Paris), Filippino Lippi (Venice), Correggio (Madrid), Lafarge (St. Thomas, New York), Giotto (Padua), Duccio (Siena), Francesco Mantegna (London), Frederick Wilson (Roxbury, Mass.).

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Chapters in Adeney's *Women of the New Testament*, Magaret E. Sangster's *Women of the Bible*, Milligan in *Women of the Bible*, Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, McCook's *Women Friends of Jesus*, Hillis in *Women of the Bible* (he regards Mary as "the woman who was a sinner"), Mrs. Martyn's *Women of the Bible*, Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*. Morrison's *The Wings of the Morning*. Dods's *Footsteps in the Path of Life*. A. C. Dixon's *Milk and Meat*. Holden's *Life's Floodtide*. Ingram's *Addresses during Holy Week*. Liddon's *Easter in St. Paul*. *Mary of Magdala*, a drama by Paul Heyse. Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of the World*.

I. **MARY HELPED**, Luke 8 : 2. Jesus was making a preaching tour of Galilee, and Luke names his company : the twelve disciples, and certain women.

2. **Certain women.** "This most remarkable circumstance is prominently mentioned by St. Luke alone, although alluded to in Matt. 27 : 55, 56 ; Mark 15 : 41. It accords alike with the probability that some of his peculiar sources of information had been derived from women ; and with the certainty that he is fond of dwelling on the graciousness and tenderness of Jesus even to a class so much despised and neglected as Eastern women. At an earlier period (John 4 : 27) the disciples had been amazed to see Jesus even talking with a woman." — *Cambridge Bible.* **Who had been healed of evil spirits.** They had all been freed from great affliction. Their gratitude led them to insist upon following Jesus, and their eager testimony reinforced the proclamation of the kingdom of God which he made. They were, so to speak, specimens of his work and of the happy effects of his kingdom. **And infirmities.** Sicknesses, weaknesses, diseases of the body as distinguished from seizure of the mind and soul. **Mary that was called Magdalene.** Mary (Miriam) was so common a




name that the additional name was given to distinguish her from other women of the same name. She was named "after *Migdol*, a 'watch-tower.' The word *Migdol* is common, but a place now marked by a squalid hamlet known as *Mejdel*, at the south of the little plain of Gennesaret where the hills approach the lake, is likely to have been Mary's home, as it is near the center of our Lord's ministry." — *The New Century Bible.* "No doubt the place was a pretty and thriving village in our Lord's day, but the modern town is composed of a few huts, near which are ruins that seem to be remains of the old watch-tower. Back of Magdala, and curving around the town, Mary might have seen the mountain rising three and four hundred feet high. In its steep caverned limestone face were the dens of the robbers whom Herod dislodged by letting his soldiers down from the hill-top in boxes." — *Rev. Henry C. McCook, D.D.* **From whom seven demons had gone out.** "It is a cruel error to confuse Mary Magdalene with the sinful woman of whom Luke has just been writing. Mary had suffered from demon-possession, as here stated, but there is nothing in the Gospels to indicate that she had ever been a woman of notoriously evil life." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* "Undoubtedly our Lord cast out of her seven devils. Taking seven as the ultimate number, it is easy to understand that this woman, like many at the present day, had been obsessed by mental derangement, intense de-

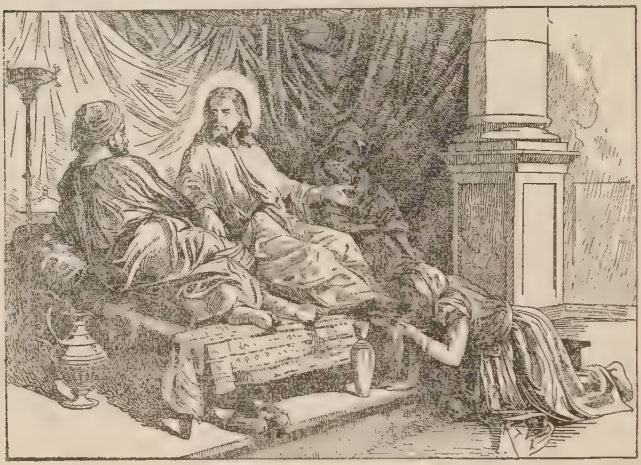
LUKE 8:1. And it came to pass soon afterwards, that he went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God, and with him the twelve,

2. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary that was called Măg-dă-lē′-nē, from whom seven demons had gone out,

---

pression, and morbid melancholy. Added to these may have been a demon of ill-temper and a persistent nervousness that made her life a burden to herself and her family. Although the Magdalene asylums of the world unjustly bear her name, it may well be that from the heaven where she has dwelt so long she rejoices with the Saviour over every lost lamb that is brought into the fold." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

THE DEMONS THAT SEIZE US. Opinion of scholars in regard to Mary's affliction is divided, some holding that demon-possession was simply a form of insanity, and others believing that it was a disease caused by the actual indwelling of an evil spirit. Demon-possession corresponding to the Bible account is seldom observed in modern times, but instances of it are related by observers in heathen lands, especially China and India. "Can we be so sure that there is no dark spiritual secret behind the phenomena which our medical men now ascribe to nerve and brain disorders? The whole subject is exceedingly obscure, as the doctors themselves admit. It is not a subject for scorn and arrogance. The mystery of it is too great." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.*



Anointing the Feet of Jesus. Bida.

In any case, we believe on the authority of Scripture in the existence of evil spirits, which profoundly influence any life that yields to them. Every temptation we do not overcome, every sin we harbor, every wicked deed and base thought, renders the work of these demons easier and more permanent. The knowledge of this should make us more constant in prayer, more determined in our struggle against temptation, more watchful, and more anxious to obtain the help of Christ, who alone can conquer these evil spirits for us.

II. **MARY HELPING**, Luke 8:1–3; 24:1. Every time Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the Gospels she is actively expressing her love for Jesus, her Saviour. She was one of the great helpers of the Bible.

1. **And it came to pass soon afterwards.** After the scene in the house of Simon the Pharisee, the sinning woman anointing Christ's feet. **That he went about through cities and villages.** The thickly populated region of Galilee. **Preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God.** Proclaiming the fact, so joyful to the Jews, that the establishment of the reign of the long-expected Messiah was at hand. **And with him the twelve.** Jesus by this time had many disciples who would have been glad and proud to attend him on such a preaching tour as this, but to permit that would be to burden the towns to which they might go, and to overload the expedition with problems of maintenance; so Jesus took only the inner circle, the Twelve.

2. **And certain women**, etc. This verse was considered in the first section.

JOHN 19:25. These things therefore the soldiers did. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clō′-păs, and Mary Măg-dă-lē′-nē.

JOHN 20:11. But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping: so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb;

12. And she beholdeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

JOHN 19:25. **These things therefore the soldiers did.** The four soldiers — a quaternion — set to guard Jesus on the cross had divided among them his garments, which belonged to them by law, and, in blind fulfilment of prophecy, had cast lots for his one-piece outer garment. **But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother.** "Four women seem to have formed the second group, a striking contrast to the four soldiers." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* They were callous and greedy; these were overwhelmed with sorrow. **And his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas.** Some think this to be the description of only one woman, but it is unlikely that there should have been two sisters each named Mary. Mary the wife of Clopas was the mother of James the Less, one of the Twelve. If she was not the sister of the Virgin Mary, that sister was Salome, the mother of St. John; compare Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40. **And Mary Magdalene.** We learn from Matt. 27:55, 56 that she had been in a little group of women, including Christ's mother, who beheld "from afar" the terrible scene of the crucifixion. Perhaps at first they were not allowed to draw nearer, perhaps they felt that they could not. At any rate, they gradually pressed closer until they stood at the foot of the cross. It might have been expected that the awful event would have brought on a recurrence of Mary's former malady, but it did not. The cure that Christ had wrought was permanent.

Ary Scheffer.

The Three Marys.

JOHN 20:11. **But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping.** The Gospel record of the events of Easter morning is a little confused, reflecting the amazement and confusion of that wonderful event. It is clear, however, that a little company of loving women came to the tomb before daybreak, found it empty, and that Mary Magdalene, who was one of them, hastened to tell the disciples. Peter and John ran to the tomb, found that the Lord's body was no longer there, and came away rejoicing in the resurrection. Then Mary Magdalene, unable to keep away from the hallowed spot and believing, not in Christ's resurrection, but that his body had been stolen by his enemies, returned to weep at the empty tomb. "It is the mourner who stands weeping at the grave of buried hopes who, perhaps first of all, needs the vision of a risen Christ; and sometimes he speaks, to the very heart, a message which inspires as true a faith as that which comes to John as he reasons from the fact of an empty tomb." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* **So, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb.** Possibly she thought that Christ's body might have been returned: she would at least see where he had lain. **And she beholdeth two angels in white.** Raiment pure and shining as if they were clothed in light. They were not there when she looked before, or at least they were not visible. **Sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.** As she thought over the events of

13. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14. When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and beholdeth Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

---

that wonderful morning Mary would perceive that, so far from allowing Christ's body to be stolen, the heavenly hosts had even appointed a guard over the place where that body had reposed, so sacred was the spot.

13. **And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?** "Woman" is not in the least a disrespectful term (see John 2 : 4), but corresponds rather to our "Lady." **She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord.** "She is so absorbed in this one thought that even the appearance and words of the angels do not disconcert or distract her." — *New Century Bible.* **And I know not where they have laid him.** This is just what the sorrowing woman had said to the disciples (John 20 : 2).

"When in darkness and clouds
The way of God is concealed,
We doubt the words of his promises
And the glory to be revealed.

"We do but trust in part;
We grope in the dark alone;
Lord, when shall we see thee as thou art,
And know as we are known?

"We say, They have taken our Lord,
And we know not where he lies,
When the light of his resurrection morn
Is breaking out of the skies." — *Phœbe Cary.*

14. **When she had thus said, she turned herself back.** Perhaps she had some indication that a person was approaching. **And beholdeth Jesus standing.** "She who had been the first to repair to the sepulcher, and is so inconsolable in her grief, is the first to behold the form of her risen Lord (compare Mark 16 : 9). Such an honor would surely have been assigned by the evangelists to the mother of their Lord, or to one of the leading apostles, had they been inventing, instead of recording, history." — *Rev. J. A. McClymont, D.D.* **And knew not that it was Jesus.** Our Lord's appearance after his resurrection seems to have been so changed that he was not readily recognized at first. The record of this is an evidence of the honesty of the writer; a false historian would have had him recognized instantly as the same Jesus.

15. **Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?** These were Christ's first recorded words after his resurrection. "*Why* do you weep, when you should rejoice?" The angels had asked the same wondering question. **Whom seekest thou?** Of course he knew, but he knew also that it would be a relief to Mary to unburden her heart. **She, supposing him to be the gardener.** The gardener would be the only one likely to be there so early in the morning. Mary's eyes were confused with tears, the dawn-light was dim, and furthermore, as has just been said, the appearance of the risen Lord was plainly somewhat changed.

*Illustration.* "I have heard mourners gathered at a funeral say afterwards, 'I could not tell you who was there.' All the great passions in their full intensity have a certain blinding power about them; but neither love nor hate nor jealousy nor anger is more effectual in sealing up the eyes than is the pressure of overwhelming grief." — *Rev. G. H. Morrison, D.D.*

**Saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence.** "Him," Mary says, not naming Jesus, for to her loving mind every other mind also was full of him. "Thou" is emphatic : he was not one of Christ's enemies, who would not give back the Lord's body if *they* had removed it. Note also that Mary does not speak of Christ's body, for she could not bear to think of him as dead; she refers to him as still alive. **Tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.** How she could do it with her slight strength she did not stop to think; she only knew that her love would find a way to remove the sacred remains from the careless custody of strangers.

16. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself, and saith unto him in Hebrew, Răb-bō′-nī; which is to say, Teacher.

17. Jesus saith to her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.

18. Mary Măg-dă-lē′-nĕ cometh and telleth the disciples, I have seen the Lord; and *that* he had said these things unto her.

16. **Jesus saith unto her, Mary.** It was his customary mode of address, and with what tender sympathy the familiar word was spoken we may well imagine.

*Illustration.* "When Joseph made himself known to his brethren, he stood in their midst and said to them, 'I am Joseph.' There are times when Jesus acts as Joseph did, and lifting up his voice cries, 'I am Christ.' But far more often, when he reveals himself, the first word that we hear is like this garden voice. It is not 'I am Christ' that we first hear; the first word that we hear is 'Thou art Mary.' I mean by that that we are drawn to Christ by the deep and restful sense that we are known." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

**She turneth herself, and saith unto him in Hebrew, Rabboni; which is to say, Teacher.** Mary had before given the speaker only a hasty and sidelong glance; now she looked at him fully, with an eager gaze, quickly brushing the tears from her eyes. The ordinary Hebrew of the day, called the Aramaic, was undoubtedly Christ's usual language, though he must also have spoken Greek at times; *e.g.*, in his conversation with Pilate. "Rabboni" means "my Rabbi, my Teacher." It was Mary's customary mode of addressing Christ.

17. **Jesus saith to her, Touch me not.** When Christ appeared a little later to the other women, as they were on their way from the tomb, he allowed them to grasp his feet in their ardent worship (Matt. 28 : 9); but Mary was clinging to her Lord as if she would never let him go again, but would retain the old human fellowship. **For I am not yet ascended unto the Father.** After his final departure from visible association with men, Christ knew and intimated, his communion with his disciples through the Spirit could be close and complete beyond anything that had been possible in the days of his flesh; to that communion he bade Mary look ahead. Also the thought may be that Mary would have time for further converse with Jesus during the forty days which lay between his resurrection and his ascension. **But go unto my brethren.** Christ had never before called his disciples "brethren"; but now, by the fellowship of sorrow and by the new and fuller faith which the resurrection was to bring them, they were to enter into a closer communion with him than they had been able to enjoy even in the days of his flesh. And these "brethren" had only a little while before all forsaken him and fled!

*Illustration.* Thomas Boston tells in his diary how one night he was walking up and down in his room in great sadness and despair of himself when his daughter Jane called to him from her bed and bade him remember how the risen Christ had called his faithless and unbelieving disciples his brethren. Then Boston asked himself, "May I think that Christ will own me as one of his brethren yet?" And the thought was to him as life from the dead.

**And say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father.** Christ had called his disciples "brethren," but he would not have them forget the infinite difference between their humanity and his deity. It was this difference that made it necessary for him to say "my" and "your" in referring to their relation to the Father. **And my God and your God.** It is not enough for us to call God "Father" and rest in his love; we must also call him "God" and bend in humble adoration; nor is the second enough without the first.

"Do we envy Mary her few minutes in the garden? As truly as by the audible utterance of our name does Christ now invite us to the perfect joy there is in his friendship, so truly as if our name alone filled his lips, our wants alone occupied his heart." — *Marcus Dods.*

18. **Mary Magdalene cometh and telleth the disciples.** She found them (Mark 16 : 10) mourning and weeping for their departed Master. Mary longed to remain with Christ, but it was an even greater joy to hasten on his errand. **I have seen the Lord.** With what exultation the words burst forth! **And that he had said these things unto her.** The other women, coming from the tomb, brought a similar account

of the risen Lord, adding his bidding that the disciples should go to Galilee, where they also should see the risen Lord (Matt. 28 : 9, 10). The disciples, however, scouted the story as idle talk (Luke 24 : 11), and disbelieved it utterly.

Mary an Example to Us. "The penitence and the constancy of the Magdalene were richly rewarded. Amongst the first of those in the Gospel story for whom a great deliverance was wrought ; amongst the first whom we find sorrowing by the cross of Christ, and watching by his tomb ; she was actually the first called upon to rejoice in the resurrection hope. A pledge, may we not say, that those who seek Christ earnestly will never seek him in vain, and that though 'weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.'" — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.*

The story of Mary Magdalene teaches us the power of love. It drew her after the Saviour. It strengthened her for ministry. It held her true and strong to the end. It won for her many blessings. "Love never faileth."

We note that the risen Lord had at once some work for Mary Magdalene to do. Love is always thus rewarded with the opportunity to serve. The loving are the serving, and they count this service their crown.

"Mary says little ; one word, 'Rabboni!' and then her Master's bidding. And it is in that immediate obedience, which cut at the very heart of all her joy, that he that hath eyes to see and ears to hear can gauge the height and depth of Mary's love." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"Mary was once trodden under foot of evil, a wreck in whom none but Christ saw any place for hope. It is what is in *him* that is powerful." — *Marcus Dods.*

"Magdalena, past is wailing,
Calm thy sorrows, cease thy tears,
They no more can be availing
As when Jesus soothed thy fears:
Raise the strain, the heavens are ringing,
Thousand voices joyous singing,
Hallelujah! Christ is King!

"Magdalena, now adore him;
Mark how triumph crowns his brow;
Peace is evermore before him,
Honor is his guerdon now.
See the wounds that tell his story
In the glad new life of glory!
Hallelujah! Christ is King!

"Magdalena, thou delightest
In the light that may not wane;
Resting where the beams are brightest,
Lo, thou fear'st not death nor pain:
Grief and woe henceforth are banished;
In the day the night has vanished;
Hallelujah! Christ is King! Amen!" — *An Old Latin Hymn.*

## LESSON VII (20). — August 12.

## MARTHA AND MARY. — Luke 10 : 38–42 ; John 11 : 1—12 : 8 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.

**PRINT Luke 10 : 38–42 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* — Luke 10 : 42.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 116 : 1–8.
**Reference Material** : Prov. 31 : 10–31.
**Primary Topic** : Two Loyal Friends of Jesus.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 10 : 38–42 ; John 11 : 20–28 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.
Print Luke 10 : 38–42 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.
**Memory Verse** : Mary hath chosen the good part. Luke 10 : 42.
**Junior Topic** : Martha and Mary.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 10 : 38–42 ; John 11 : 1—12 : 8 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.
Print Luke 10 : 38–42 ; Mark 14 : 3–9.
**Memory Verse** : Luke 10 : 42.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : True Friendship Shown by Martha and Mary.
**Topics for Young People and Adults** : Home Problems Illustrated by Martha and Mary.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will center their thoughts on serving Jesus in the home, patterning after Martha in her zeal for work but not in her faultfinding, and imitating Mary in her humble love of Jesus.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes** may brighten the lesson with a little debate, the two sides contending which is the most needed in the Christian life, Martha's service or Mary's worship.

**The Older Classes** have three important topics to consider : the relative values of contemplation and activity in the religious life, the importance of generous giving to Christ, and the proofs of our immortality. Three members of the class may be appointed in advance to lead in these three discussions.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The event of Luke 10 : 38–42 took place in November or December, A.D. 29 ; the raising of Lazarus, in February, A.D. 30 ; the anointing by Mary, on Saturday, April 1, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — Bethany and Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

A word-picture of Bethany.
The family at Bethany in relation to Simon the leper.
Christ's resurrection miracles.
Mary of Bethany distinguished from the woman who was a sinner and Mary Magdalene.
Martha and Mary as types.
What the Bethany home meant to Christ during Passion Week.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Two Loyal Friends of Jesus.**

I. MARTHA'S GOOD PART, MARY'S BETTER PART, Luke 10 : 38–42.
   A beautiful household.
   The life of service.
   The life of worship.

II. THE BLESSING THAT CAME TO MARTHA AND MARY, John 11.
   Christ's strange delay.
   Martha's imperfect faith.
   "I am the resurrection and the life."

III. MARY'S GRATEFUL TRIBUTE, Mark 14 : 3–9 ; John 12 : 1–8.
   The costly offering.
   The foolish complaint.
   The wide memorial of love.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ in the House of Martha and Mary, by Bassano, Velasquez (London), Steenwyck (Paris), Jouvenet (Paris), Le Sueur (Munich), Siemiradski, Paul Leroy, Schönherr, Hofmann. The Raising of Lazarus, by Fra Angelico (Florence), Giotto (Padua), Leandro Bassano (Venice), Sebastian del Piombo (London), Tintoretto, Rubens, Rembrandt, Froment, Jouvenet, Benjamin West, Henry O. Tanner, Elihu Vedder, etc.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Chapters on Martha and Mary in Margaret E. Sangster's *Women of the Bible*, Bishop Potter in *Women of the Bible*, Principal Rowlands in *Women of the Bible*, Hastings's *Great Men and Women of the Bible*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*, Adeney's *Women of the New Testament*, Bushnell's *Christ and His Salvation*, Stimson's *The New Things of God*, Thompson's *Burden Bearing*, Watson's *The Life of the Master*, Aitken's *The Highway of Holiness*, Moule's *From Sunday to Sunday*, Wright's *The Heart of the Master*, Broughton's *Table Talks of Jesus*, Matheson's *Representative Women of the Bible*. Mary and her ointment are prominent in the beautiful story of Christ's times, *Princess Salome*, by Burris Jenkins.

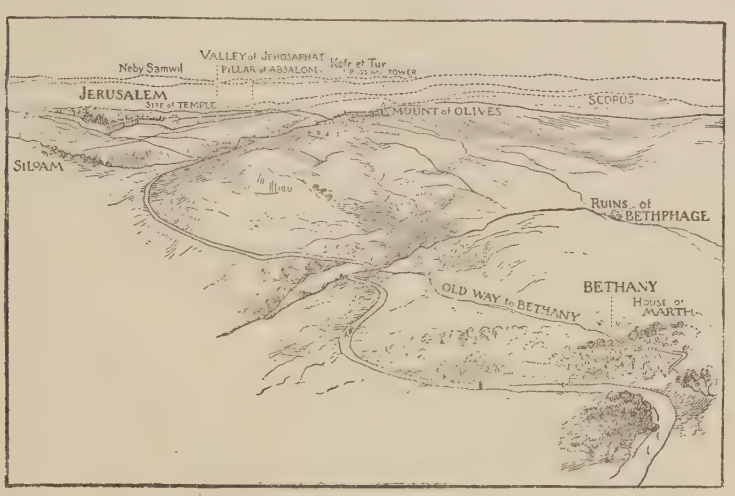
LUKE 10 : 38. Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

I. MARTHA'S GOOD PART, MARY'S BETTER PART, Luke 10 : 38–42. "The home of the Gospels dearest to the Christian heart is that of Bethany, where the Master found a refuge from labor and persecution, and constant sympathy with Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus." — *Hastings*.

38. **Now as they went on their way.** Our Lord and his disciples had left Galilee and were on their way to Jerusalem, where he was to give his life for our salvation. It was a journey crowded with wonderful events and no less wonderful teachings, and among the most beautiful of the latter are the words we are to study. **He entered into a certain village.** It was Bethany, just over the crest of Olivet east of Jerusalem, on the road leading to Jericho. Bethany (meaning, perhaps, "the House of Dates") was very near Jerusalem, and dwellers there were open to the hostility of Christ's enemies if they took his side. Lazarus and his sisters were in especial danger on account of the resurrection miracle, all traces of which the embittered Jews would have been glad to obliterate. Therefore Mark and Luke, writing soon after these events, said nothing about the resurrection of Lazarus and concealed the abode of his family, while John, writing much later and in far-off Ephesus, is full and outspoken on both points. Perhaps when John wrote the brother and sisters were all dead. **And a certain woman named Martha.** Perhaps Martha's name was omitted from the first copies of the Gospel, and it read only "a certain woman" like "a certain village."

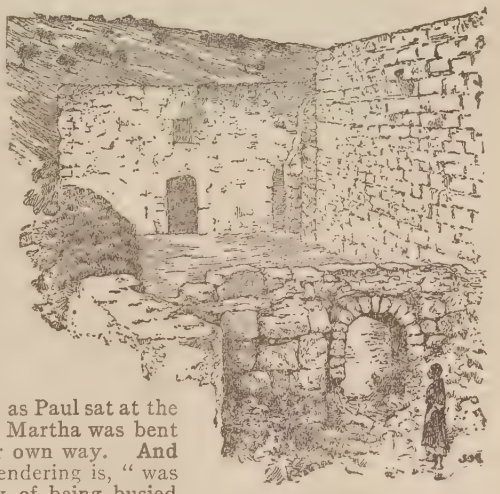
39. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word.

Some think that Martha was the widow of "Simon the leper" named later; others think that she was his daughter. She is named first and she takes the lead as if she




View of Bethany and South.

were the oldest of the three. Hers was at any rate the most active and aggressive temperament. **Received him into her house.** This also indicates that Martha was the head of the little family. It is a lovely picture that is here hinted, — the travel-worn and homeless Guest turning with longing toward this hospitable home. "If I were asked what was the chief value of the story of Mary and Martha, I should say that it lay in its exquisite and largely incidental revelations of the humanity of Jesus." — *Bishop Henry C. Potter.*



Home of Mary and Martha, Bethany.

39. **And she had a sister called Mary.** "Socially subordinate (inferable from the manner of reference) though the spiritual heroine of the tale." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Who also sat at the Lord's feet.** That was the attitude and position of a disciple and pupil, as Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel. Mary as well as Martha was bent upon honoring the Lord, but in her own way. **And heard his word.** A more literal rendering is, "was listening to his discourse." Think of being busied unnecessarily with household tasks when such a priceless opportunity was at hand! Yet how often we allow thoughts of the world and matters of trivial and temporary value to distract us from higher and eternal interests! — for example, our wandering thoughts in church.

40. But Martha was cumbered about much serving; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41. But the Lord answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things:

42. But one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

40. **But Martha was cumbered about much serving.** Literally, she was "dragged in different directions" by her self-imposed duties, was distracted, as fretful housekeepers so easily become. Her basal motive was a noble one, to serve the Master; but it was over-service in one direction preventing the service he most desired in another direction. As Christ once said about tithing as compared with the more spiritual phases of religion, this she should have done, *and not leave the other undone.* There is ample room in the religious life for worship and for work. **And she came up to him.** The Greek verb graphically pictures her coming up quickly, bustling up and jerking out her complaint as if she hardly had time to get in a sentence. **And said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone?** "The Greek word means 'left me alone in the middle of my work' to come and listen to you."—*Cambridge Bible.* The habit of faultfinding readily spreads out and takes into its

Christ with Mary and Martha. Siemiradzki.

sweep those that cannot possibly be held blameworthy. Thus Martha even dares to involve the Master in her captious criticism, as if he should have known better than to allow Mary to sit there idle. **Bid her therefore that she help me.** Martha implies that it would be of no use for *her* to talk to Mary, but that Jesus might be able to send her to her duty. And note Martha's imperative; she is so piqued that she dares to command the Messiah! Faultfinding and conceited presumption are closely allied.

41. **But the Lord answered and said unto her.** We can almost see the smile on his lips and the tender light in his eyes, and hear the loving tones of his voice. Jesus knows well how to make allowances. **Martha, Martha.** Our Lord seems to have used this repetition of the name when he wished to rebuke some one very affectionately; thus the "Simon, Simon," of Luke 22:31, and the "Saul, Saul," of Acts 9:4. **Thou art anxious and troubled about many things.** We are to take thought for our tasks, but not anxious thought; we are to plan our work and work our plan, but we cannot do it well unless we do it serenely.

42. **But one thing is needful.** Christ *may* have meant that only one dish would suffice for the meal that Martha was preparing, but the more natural interpretation is that only one thing is needful in a life, and that is a calm and trustful resting in

God. This, of course, does not preclude activity ; rather, it insures the richest accomplishments. **For Mary hath chosen the good part.** "The good portion, conceived of as a share in a banquet." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Which shall not be taken away from her.** Martha had been trying to take it away from her, and put in its place a less blessed portion.

A Life of Service and of Work. "If I were to choose for myself the woman who should best administer a home, the woman whom, in homely phrase, it were a pleasure to tie to, I would put my trust in Martha rather than in Mary. Saint Martha is as worthy of loving admiration as her sister Mary." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

*Illustration.* "A kinsman of mine was once entertained by a gifted woman, who was so much absorbed in his interesting conversation that she forgot to inspect the 'spare room' in which he slept, and in which he passed the night in exasperating collisions with a silver soup-tureen which long before had been concealed from the burglars in his bed ; and I confess I agreed with a cynical female critic who observed, on hearing the story, that clever and devout women might sometimes most wisely 'pray and talk less and keep house more.'" — *Bishop Henry C. Potter.*

"Of all things Jesus delights in none are better than humble discipleship. Service he looks for ; but service must follow discipleship, not precede it ; otherwise it will go in mistaken lines, wasting itself on efforts which, though well meaning, are yet unwise." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.*

Every Christian should combine Martha and Mary in his or her life, working when Christ calls for work, and worshipping when opportunity for worship is given by the Master.

The Raising of Lazarus. Rembrandt.

II. **THE BLESSING THAT CAME TO MARTHA AND MARY,** John 11. Christ's Strange Delay. The most stupendous miracle of the Gospel histories — if any miracle is to be regarded as more wonderful than another — is the raising from the dead of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. He was a younger brother, as many think, and he was certainly very dear to his sisters, so that when severe sickness came upon him they were filled with alarm, and sent an urgent message to Jesus.

Our Lord was at that time in retirement in Peræa, to the east of the Jordan, and when the startling news came to him he made the calm prophecy that the sickness of his young friend would not end in death, but would redound to the glory of God and would lead to the death of the Son of God.

Then came a strange happening, — Jesus remained in Peræa two whole days ; and John, just before recording the remarkable fact, assures us that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. It was one of the many delays of God's providence that so try our human patience and test our faith. Christ wished, before resigning the flesh, to leave behind him a stupendous and indubitable miracle, a glorious victory over death and the grave. Some might fail to see in his own resurrection an evidence of human immortality, since he was the Son of God ; but that

doubt could not apply to the resurrection of Lazarus. Therefore he waited until Lazarus had died, so that on his arrival the body might have been some time in the grave, and no one could charge that it was merely a case of suspended animation, or doubt the reality of the miracle. Christ loved his three friends, but he also loved the world ; and the three would not have been friends of his if they had not been glad to suffer a bit longer, that the mission of Christ might be more perfectly performed.

MARTHA'S IMPERFECT FAITH. Christ's interview with Martha is one of the most remarkable in Scripture, an interview so true to life that it authenticates the entire account of the miracle. Bethany is less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews from that city had come to condole with Martha and Mary, for the usual thirty-day period of mourning — "three of weeping, seven of lamentation, and twenty of sorrow" — was in full progress. Martha, as the oldest and the head of the household, heard of Christ's approach. She went to meet him, leaving Mary prostrate in grief at home and ignorant of the Master's coming.

Martha's first words were full of faith : "Lord, if you had been here, Lazarus would not have died" — not a reproach, but a longing. "And even now," she hastened to add, "God will answer your prayer for anything." She did not dare to express the wild thought of her brother's return from the grave.

From a photograph by Wilson.

Bethany. Tomb of Lazarus.

When Jesus assured her, calmly, that Lazarus would rise again, Martha answered that she knew he would rise at the last day, in the general resurrection ; implying that that was cold comfort *now*. Even this admission of hers, however, was full of faith, for the Old Testament taught the immortality of the soul only vaguely, and large numbers of the Jews of her day denied the doctrine.

"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE." It was to Martha, then, that our Lord spoke those glorious words, "*I am the resurrection and the life.*" He did not need to pray to his Father for the raising of Lazarus, for he had resurrection power in himself. He did not need to wait till the last day, for he *was*, at that time and at all times, a present resurrection and life. "*He that believeth in me, though he were dead* [as to the body], *yet shall he live* [as to the soul]. *And whosoever liveth* [as to the body] *and believeth in me shall never die* [as to the soul]."

Our Lord calls for belief. His question is quick and heart-searching. Martha's response is as quick and is satisfactory, for she makes the confession which on Peter's lips Christ had already hailed as the foundation of his church, the confession of the Messiahship of Jesus. Since he was Messiah, his words were true and his claims were indisputable. Martha proves to be as good a learner as Mary, though not so humble.

The remainder of the scene passes swiftly. Mary is brought by her sister from the house of mourning to the place outside Bethany where Jesus was waiting for her, and she also greets the Lord with the longing cry, "If you had been here, my brother had not died." How often Mary and Martha must have said that to each other during those four days !

MARK 14:3. And while he was in Bĕth'-ă-nў in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster cruse of ointment of pure nard very costly; *and* she brake the cruse, and poured it over his head.

4. But there were some that had indignation among themselves, *saying*, To what purpose hath this waste of the ointment been made?

No words can picture the joy of the sisters when the brother was restored to them. The rapture of that reunited family was perhaps unequalled in the world's history, as certainly no other family ever had so marvellous a reunion. There is in the narrative one most illuminating touch, the statement that many of the Jews who came *to Mary* and saw Lazarus believed on Jesus, showing that Mary and not Martha was the leader in the grateful witness-bearing.

III. **MARY'S GRATEFUL TRIBUTE**, Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–8. It was the evening of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, at the beginning of Passion Week. Our Lord was resting from his journey in the beloved little village where he had often rested before.

3. **And while he was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper.** There have been many suppositions regarding this Simon. He has been wrongly confused with Simon the Pharisee at whose house Christ's feet were anointed by the woman who was a sinner, and Mary of Bethany has been absurdly confused with that woman. Some think this Simon was a friend of Lazarus or even his brother. Some regard him as the husband of Mary; others, as the husband of Martha. It is not even certain that he was living at this time, and the entire matter must rest in conjecture. If he was acting as host, he could not have been a leper then, and probably Christ had cured him, thus doubling Mary's cause for gratitude. **As he sat at meat.** John tells us that "they" (and he does not say *who*) had made a feast for Christ, Martha serving the tables, while Lazarus was sitting with Jesus as one of the guests. **There came a woman.** John tells us that it was Mary. We have already explained why the writers of the first three Gospels were so reticent concerning this family. **Having an alabaster cruse.** Alabaster is a form of gypsum, or sulphate of lime, translucent and beautiful when cut and polished. "At Alabastron in Egypt there was a manufactory of small vases for holding perfumes, which were made from a stone found in the neighboring mountains. The Greeks gave to these vessels the name of the city from which they came, calling them *alabastrons* [as we speak of *glasses*]. This name was eventually extended to the stone of which they were formed; and at length the term *alabaster* was applied without distinction to all perfume vessels, of whatever materials they consisted." — *Rev. G. F. Maclear, D.D.* **Of ointment.** The ancients were very fond of fragrant ointments, which were cooling in their warm climate, and used them thoroughly over their bodies. **Of pure nard.** For spikenard was often adulterated, being so valuable. It was made from a plant allied to valerian found in the mountains of India. The odor is like a mixture of valerian and patchouli. **Very costly.** Only the rich could afford it, and it was probably Mary's most precious and valuable possession. John tells us that there was a pound of it (the pound of twelve ounces is meant). Cambyses included this ointment in the gifts he sent to the Ethiopians, and Horace promised Virgil (*Carm.* IV. xii. 16, 17) a cask of wine for a small onyx box of it. **And she brake the cruse.** Mary snapped off the slender neck of the flask, letting the ointment flow out freely. The cruse also was valuable, but she made the sacrifice complete. Some, however, think that what Mary did was merely to break the wax seal which kept in the ointment, an act equivalent to removing the stopper from one of our bottles. **And poured it over his head.** Not only over his head, but — a most unusual attention, she poured it over his feet, which were extended outward as he reclined at the table, and wiped them with her long, flowing hair (John 12:3). The fragrance of the ointment filled all the house, as we are told by the beloved disciple, to whom undoubtedly the deed was especially pleasing.

4. **But there were some that had indignation among themselves.** John tells us that the murmuring was started by Judas, the treasurer of the Twelve, whose love of money was to lead to the betrayal of his Redeemer. **Saying, To what purpose hath this waste of the ointment been made?** Christ's disciples were for the most part poor men, horrified at the waste of anything, and not yet brought to see that nothing could be wasted that was lavished upon Jesus. In all ages it has been hard for such men to recognize the value of beauty and grace in the religious life.

5. For this ointment might have been sold for above three hundred shillings, and given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6. But Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7. For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good: but me ye have not always.

8. She hath done what she could; she hath anointed my body beforehand for the burying.

9. And verily I say unto you, Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

---

5. **For the ointment might have been sold for above three hundred shillings.** "Denarii," the coin that was a day's wage for a common laborer in the time of Christ. The ointment was therefore worth about a year's wages, perhaps $1000 as work is valued to-day. Judas was frantic at seeing so much money's worth thrown away. **And given to the poor.** John says outright that this was a mere pretence; that Judas did not care for the poor, but, being the treasurer of the Twelve, stole from the common fund the gifts of friends and followers. John would not have written this if he had not known it to be true. **And they murmured against her.** The Greek verb expresses great but partly suppressed indignation.

6. **But Jesus said, Let her alone.** He had heard enough of the murmuring, even though it was mere muttering, to catch its unkind purport. **Why trouble ye her?** Christ always bids men go to the root motive of their acts and words — not care for the poor, in this case, but greed and censoriousness. **She hath wrought a good work on me.** "She did not know how great was her deed. She poured her entire heart in a passionate abandon of love and thankfulness in that offering of fragrance, spent once for all that the Master might know all that she could not speak. Thus have martyrs borne testimony, and missionaries of the cross lavished their lives for the sake of a heroic ideal. Thus have physicians risked their lives and laid down their youth and strength on the altar of medical science in experiments fatal to them, but thereafter useful in the saving of a thousand lives." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

7. **For ye have the poor always with you.** Some have wrested this statement of fact applying to Christ's times into a prophecy that the poor shall always be in the earth, and that therefore it is useless to try to abolish poverty. It should be unnecessary to say that so cruel a doctrine is absolutely foreign to the teachings of the merciful Christ. **And whensoever ye will ye can do them good.** And of course the best thing to do for the poor, as poor, is to show them how to lift themselves out of poverty into the life of comfort, peace, and prosperity that Christ wishes for all his children. **But me ye have not always.** First things first. The claims of Christ supersede all other claims. Any effort to serve him calls for the dropping of all other service, however noble and urgent it may be. "The striking originality of this saying, and the large claim which it makes, are evidence of its origin from Him who spake as never man spake. Considering how Christ speaks of the poor elsewhere, these words may be regarded as quite beyond the reach of a writer of fiction." — *Plummer.*

8. **She hath done what she could.** This was high praise from the Master; no higher praise is possible for any one to receive. "It does not mean that she has done the little which was possible, but has done the great thing which the occasion offered." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* **She hath anointed my body beforehand for the burying.** "Mary seems to have had a presentiment that our Lord was among them for the last time." — *Principal D. Rowlands.* The word translated "beforehand" implies also the eager desire to be the first in some service, as if Mary could not bear the thought that another should perform the sacred task and had hastened in her love to take it upon herself.

9. **And verily I say unto you.** Thus Christ was in the habit of emphasizing the utterances that he thought most necessary for his hearers to understand and remember. The following is such an utterance, which every Christian should ponder in all its bearings. **Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world.** "The gospel" is the good news of salvation which Christ came to proclaim — God's love, God's forgiveness, extended to all men through God's Son. This is

one of the weightiest of Christ's sayings, because it involves a prophecy that the gospel shall spread throughout the earth, a prophecy already wonderfully fulfilled, and each day going swiftly on to completion. A marvellous saying, this, to come from the mouth of a Jewish peasant, a humble man in an obscure corner of the vast Roman Empire! **That also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.** Not only the gospel shall spread over the earth, but "also," along with it, all men shall know of the kind act performed by Mary of Bethany. This prophecy also is gloriously fulfilled; and how like Christ it was to place alongside his infinite sacrifice this comparatively little sacrifice of a loving woman!

The Wide Memorial of Love. "Are we willing to give to the Master what we have? If so, there will be a harvest of glorious surprises in the immediate future." — *Rev. Len G. Broughton, D.D.*

*Illustration.* Dr. G. Campbell Morgan tells of a woman who came to him longing to be of service for Christ. He asked for her voice for ten days. She consented reluctantly, thinking she could not sing well enough. That very night a song she sang in Dr. Morgan's meeting brought to Christ a man who became one of the mightiest Christian workers in the nation.

"Bring Mary to our banquets, O Lord! Bring souls that can sympathize with another because they have forgotten themselves! Break the box that the ointment may flow! Shatter the thought of self that there may be the fragrance of thought-reading! I shall be fit for every banquet if I have the spirit of Mary." — *George Matheson.*

## LESSON VIII (21). — August 19.

## STEPHEN THE MARTYR. — Acts 6:1—8:3; 22:20.

**PRINT Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-60.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* — Rom. 8:35.

**Devotional Reading**: Rom. 8:31–39.
**Primary Topic**: How Stephen Showed His Love for Jesus.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 6:8–15; 7:54–60.
**Memory Verse**: And God was with him. Acts 7:9.
**Junior Topic**: Stephen Speaks Boldly for Jesus.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 6:8–15; 7:54–60.
**Memory Verses**: Acts 7:59, 60.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: The First Christian Martyr.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: The Spirit of Stephen in the Modern Church.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** cannot fail to be impressed by the heroic story of Stephen. Treat the first Christian martyr as an example of fidelity to the truth. Urge the boys and girls to imitate him in standing up for Christ and for the right, no matter what hindrances and opposition they may meet. Every schoolboy or schoolgirl will know what it means to follow Stephen's example in such matters as honesty in examinations, for instance.

**The Older Classes** will review Stephen's familiar story, and will pass on to discussing the many modern situations that call for men and women of Stephen's character, — when, for instance, political corruption needs to be exposed, profanity rebuked, Sabbath-desecration ended, the prohibitory law enforced, slander rebuked, infidelity opposed with the truth. Many circumstances to-day call loudly for Christians like Stephen.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Probably A.D. 36.
**Place.** — Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The origin and work of deacons.
What is known of the organization of the early church.
The character of Stephen.
Stephen compared with Paul; with Barnabas.
Mobs in the Old Testament.
Mobs in the New Testament.
How the mob spirit may be quelled.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The First Christian Martyr.**

I. Stephen the Deacon, Acts 6: 1–7.
The origin of deacons.
The wisdom of church organization.

II. Stephen the Witness-bearer, Acts 6: 8—7: 53.
Stephen's works and words.
Stephen's enemies and trial.
Stephen's defence and attack.
Bold speech for Christ.

III. Stephen the Martyr, Acts 7: 54–60; 8: 1; 22: 20.
Stephen's heavenly comforters.
Stephen's glorious death.
Paul's share in the tragedy.
The spirit of Stephen in the modern church.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Life of St. Stephen, by Fra Angelico, Chapel of Nicholas V., Rome: a series of six paintings in lunettes.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Banks's *Paul and His Friends.* Hastings's *Great Men and Women of the Bible.* Keble's *Christian Year* ("St. Stephen's Day"). Principal Rowland in *Men of the New Testament.* Westcott's *Peterborough Sermons.* Whyte's *Bible Characters. Stephen, a Soldier of the Cross*, a vivid story by Florence M. Kingsley. David Smith's *Life and Letters of Paul.* Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Paul.* Wilson's *The Church We Forget.* Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.*

**I. STEPHEN THE DEACON,** Acts 6: 1–7. The Origin of Deacons. The simple organization of the early church, led by the apostles alone, soon proved inadequate to care for the increasing numbers of Christians. The case was like that of Moses in the Exodus; and as Moses was forced to appoint elders to aid him in the administration, so the apostles were compelled by the necessities of the case to appoint deacons or "ministers," for that is what the word means in the Greek.

Philip de Champaigne.
St. Stephen.

The origin of deacons was the complaint of the foreign-speaking and foreign-born Jews that the widows in their number were neglected in the daily distribution of food and money which was a part of the brotherly system of the early church, the disciples having all things in common. The twelve apostles promptly saw that they must not allow their time to be taken up with such matters, which could be attended to just as well by others, but that they should spend all their time and strength in the work of preaching and teaching, thus using to the full the wonderful experience they had had under Christ. Therefore they called the church together and bade the general body hunt up seven men "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." They were to nominate these seven, and the apostles were to appoint them, and thus constitute them their own representatives as well as the officers of the church.

The seven thus interestingly selected all had Greek names, and some have thought that the church was so eager to prove its disinterestedness that it chose all seven of the deacons from foreign-born Jews. This, however, is not likely, since one of them is expressly singled out as being a proselyte from Antioch. At any rate, the head of the list is the man we are to study, Stephen, the only one whose character is described. He is set down as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," and surely no higher praise could be given to any man. It is to be noted that a very spiritual man was selected for a very practical task. Spirituality never detracts from practical ability, but aids it mightily.

The Wisdom of Church Organization. From this simple beginning the process of organizing the church has gone on through the centuries until now it is probably the most highly organized and certainly the most effective of earthly institutions. It is organized for missions, home and foreign, city missions, rescue missions. It is organized for evangelism, for religious education, for a thousand forms

ACTS 6:8. And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people.

9. But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called *the synagogue* of the Lĭb′-ĕr-tĭnes, and of the Çȳ-rē′-nĭ-ăns, and of the Ăl-ĕx-ăn′-drĭ-ăns, and of them of Çĭ-lĭ′-çi-ȧ and Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10. And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.

---

of charity. It is organized for men and women, for the youth, for boys and girls and even for the babies. Its organizations reach out into the social and political fields. A vast army of men and women is engaged in guiding, maintaining, and extending these organizations.

Some think that the church is too highly organized, and certainly it may be supporting some organizations that might be dropped or consolidated without harm. Especially, we do not need nearly two hundred different Protestant denominations in the United States. But the evils of over-organization are as nothing compared with what would be the evils of under-organization. It is well that the church has an abundance of tools with which to do its work. Each organization appeals to a different set of workers, and furnishes them an avenue of activity just to their liking.

We cannot have too many organizations provided all are alive and are filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ. An organization becomes hurtful only when it is an end in itself, or when it stands in the way of a more useful organization. The Christian church is strong and beautiful partly because it is highly organized, as man, the most highly organized animal, is ruler of the world.

II. **STEPHEN THE WITNESS-BEARER**, Acts 6:8—7:53. "Stephen is the central figure between Jesus and Paul. Let us think of a prism — that three-sided bar of glass on which, if you cast a pure undivided sunbeam or ray of light, it will, by passing through it, be broken up into its component parts and colors, beautiful, full of radiance of various sorts. Stephen was such a prism in the church life. On the one side of him you have the pure clear unbroken peace of the church's childhood, steadfast faith and pure joy, the unbroken peace of the early days of Christianity, all simple and white as can be, but yet unconscious of its true character; and on the other side of Stephen you have that same life, but broken, scattered and bleeding, yet bleeding so as to show its heart." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

8. **And Stephen.** His name is from the Greek word for "crown," — a beautiful coincidence, since he was to be the first to wear the crown of martyrdom. **Full of grace and power.** He was a winsome and powerful speaker, and the grace and power of God rested upon him. He was "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," as is said in verse 5. **Wrought great wonders and signs among the people.** We have been told already in the Acts (Acts 2:43; 5:12) that *many* wonders and signs were done by the apostles; but these miracles done by Stephen are called *great*, and seem to have surpassed those done up to that point by any apostle.

9. **But there arose certain of . . . the synagogue of the Libertines.** "This is a designation of Jews who having once been Roman slaves had been manumitted, or of the descendants of such Jews. Many Jews had been taken to Rome by Pompey after 63 B.C." — *Prof. George H. Gilbert.* **And of the Cyrenians.** Cyrene, a large city of northern Africa, and the region around it, were full of Jews. **And of the Alexandrians.** Alexandria, in northern Egypt, was founded by Alexander the Great, and was second only to Rome in size and importance at this time. Two of the five sections of the city were set apart for Jews. **And of them of Cilicia and Asia.** Tarsus, from which Saul came, was in Cilicia, and he doubtless attended the Cilician synagogue. Asia means the Roman province of Asia, equivalent to the modern Asia Minor. These are all synagogues of Grecian Jews, that is, Greek-speaking proselytes to the Jewish faith, so that probably Stephen himself was of their number. His Greek name also would indicate that. **Disputing with Stephen.** "Disputing" means carrying on debates, but rather hot debates.

10. **And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.** This is what Christ had promised his disciples would happen (Luke 21:15), and what has happened over and over when men full of Bible wisdom and of God's Holy Spirit speak the truth of God to their fellow men.

11. Then they suborned men, who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God.

12. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council,

13. And set up false witnesses, who said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law:

14. For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us.

15. And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

11. **Then they suborned men.** They bribed men to bear false witness, stopping at nothing in their offended bigotry and self-conceit. **Who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses.** As Moses had spoken God's words at God's command, speaking against those words would be equivalent to blasphemy, even though literally it concerned only a man. **And against God.** "This was the construction which these witnesses put upon language which had probably been uttered by Stephen in the same way as Christ had said (John 4 : 21), 'The time cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.'" — *Cambridge Bible.*

12. **And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes.** The common people and also their officials, the members of the Sanhedrin — the heads of clans and the appointed teachers and custodians of the law. All were alike moved against Stephen. **And came upon him, and seized him.** The Greek implies that they rushed upon him suddenly and all together. It was an organized and angry mob. "Seized" is in the original an unusual word implying not only arrest but dragging Stephen along with them. It was a typical illustration of the cruel and arbitrary mob spirit. **And brought him into the council.** The Sanhedrin, the highest tribunal of the Jews, their Supreme Court, a body of seventy made up of the high priest, former high priests, and representatives of the heads of clans and of the scribes.

13. **And set up false witnesses.** Doubtless the persons already mentioned in verse 11 as suborned. **Who said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against the holy place, and the law.** The same accusation as was brought against Paul years later in Jerusalem, leading to his arrest and to his long imprisonment. The Jews thought so highly of the temple and of the Bible that the bare charge of profaning them served to condemn a man in their eyes.

14. **For we have heard him say.** They had doubtless been listening to Stephen to catch him in his words, just as the scribes and Pharisees used to listen to Jesus. **That this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place.** The temple. One of the charges brought against Jesus, born of a wilful misunderstanding of his prophecy of his resurrection, speaking of the temple of his body. Stephen may have quoted those words of the Lord in some discourse on the resurrection of Christ. **And shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us.** This was one of the charges brought against Socrates, that he sought to introduce "new customs." We know how earnestly Christ declared that he did not come to destroy the law of Moses, but to fulfil it; and yet he did not hesitate to set off, for example, his own law of love against the Old Testament law of "an eye for an eye," and his own principle of Sabbath freedom against the countless absurd restrictions with which the Jewish legalists had hedged about the sacred day. As a faithful preacher of Christ's "good news" Stephen had doubtless continued these teachings of the Master.

15. **And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him.** There was something in the appearance or bearing of this heroic man of God, filled with God's Spirit, which drew all eyes toward him, even those of his bitterest foes, and held them spellbound. It was one of the most thrilling scenes in history. **Saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.** Thus the face of Moses had glowed as he came from the tabernacle. "As if in refutation of the charge made against him, Stephen receives the same mark of divine favor which had been granted to Moses." — *Humphrey.* "It is possible that the representation of St. Stephen in sacred art as a young man may be due to this comparison of his face to that of an angel, angels being always represented as in the bloom of youth." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* The glory which Stephen saw in the opening heaven was reflected in his face.

Acts 7: 54. Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

---

Stephen's Defence and Attack. The address made by Stephen in his own defence is one of the most powerful and effective of which we have any knowledge, in either sacred or secular history. It is strongly based on the Bible, from which it quotes constantly, directly or indirectly. Stephen shows in this way his reverence for the law which he is charged with seeking to overthrow.

The speech is a summary of the history of the Jews, but it is made with the one object of bringing out clearly the argument for Christianity most suited to the occasion. It shows the working of God's providence in history, a providence that operated not in the institutions and petty regulations on which the Jews laid so great stress, but in ways diverse, unexpected, and strange. Abraham owned only enough of the Holy Land to serve as a buryingplace. Jacob and the other patriarchs died in Egypt. In Egypt, and not in the Holy Land, the Hebrews grew into a great nation. For forty years they wandered in the wilderness. Why should the Jews, of all people, charge any one with an infraction of customs? Should they not rather expect God's providence to be continually working out for them in unaccustomed ways?

Bold Speech for Christ. From defence, Stephen leaped into an attack for which he had been preparing throughout. The Jews, in all their history, had mocked at and opposed their deliverers. Their great leader and lawgiver, Moses, in whose name Stephen's enemies brought their charge against him, had been driven from Egypt for forty years into the land of Midian. The same Moses had prophesied that another deliverer would arise, like himself. The same Moses, after he had freed the nation from bondage, was scorned by the nation in the matter of the golden calf. Later, when the sanctuary had been built, predecessor of that temple which Stephen was accused of profaning, the Jews by their disobedience had despoiled it of its very heart, the ark of the Sacred Presence, and God withdrew from the sanctuary until the days of David.

Then it was that Stephen, fired with holy wrath, could no longer contain himself for the orderly survey of the shameful history. Turning to his persecutors, he burst out in stinging invective: "*Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them which showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now been betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not.*"

Thus Stephen, the prosecuted, became the prosecutor, and in the hearing of all the ages turned the tables on his adversaries.

III. **STEPHEN THE MARTYR**, Acts 7:54–60; 8:1; 22:20. The effect of Stephen's speech was instantaneous and terrible. Doubtless he expected the result, but did not care. He intended to proclaim the truth and testify for Jesus, no matter what it might cost him.

54. **Now when they heard these things.** Stephen's long and impassioned address, of which of course only a bare summary is given in the Acts. **They were cut to the heart.** These same words are used of the Sanhedrin when confronted by Peter's bold witnessing for Christ, Acts 5:33. Such testimony was like a lash on the bigoted minds of those cruel men. **And they gnashed on him with their teeth.** Their fierce and fanatical wrath made wild beasts of them, and they acted like wild beasts. Their eyes were narrowed, their brows lowered, their beards protruded, their mouths snarled, they had become human tigers.

55. **But he, being full of the Holy Spirit.** What a contrast to those evil men, full of the evil spirit! **Looked up stedfastly into heaven.** Doubtless it was a silent prayer that lifted his glowing countenance. The faces of his enemies looked downward, glowering and brutal; the face of the heroic saint was raised steadily toward the one source of his help, his strength, and his calmness. **And saw the glory of God.** He had a vision of the Most High shining in the splendor that always surrounds him. Stephen had just spoken of him (Acts 7:2), in words nowhere else used in the New Testament, as "the God of glory."

56. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57. But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord;

58. And they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Though cursed and scorned and bruised with stones:
But looking upward, full of grace,
He prayed, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face." — *Tennyson, "The Two Voices."*

**And Jesus standing on the right hand of God.** The right hand was the position of honor. Jesus was standing to receive and welcome his faithful servant, so soon to be with him; elsewhere he is described as *sitting* at God's right hand.

56. **And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened.** The fact of the X-ray shows us how seemingly solid and opaque matter may be transparent to the fitting sort of vision; so the ceiling and roof of the building became transparent to Stephen's enlightened and clarified gaze. **And the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.** Stephen's use of Christ's favorite name for himself, "the Son of man," shows how thoroughly saturated Stephen had become with the words as well as the spirit of his Saviour.

57. **But they cried out with a loud voice.** Seeking to drown Stephen's words with the outcry. **And stopped their ears.** As if they could not allow another syllable of such blasphemy to find access to their pure minds. **And rushed upon him with one accord.** "As though he were one convicted of idolatry, in which case (Deut. 13: 9, 10) 'the hand of *all the people*' was to be upon the offender." — *Prof. J. R. Lumby.*

From a photograph by Bonfils.

Place of the Stoning of Stephen near the Brook Kedron.

58. **And they cast him out of the city.** The Holy City was not to be polluted by an execution. Thus Christ also was slain "outside the city wall." **And stoned him.** Death by stoning was the punishment for blasphemy laid down in the Mosaic law (Lev. 24: 16, 23), and in this the Jews were acting legally; but no vote of the Sanhedrin is recorded, and doubtless the trial of Stephen was no more conducted with regard to law than was that of Jesus. In one important respect it was more illegal, for only the Roman authorities had the right to condemn any one to death. **And the witnesses.** Doubtless the false witnesses who had testified that Stephen had blasphemed. They were required to cast the first stones (Deut. 17: 7), and in this point also the proceeding took on the outward appearance of legality. **Laid down their garments.** They had removed their outer garments in order to throw the stones. **At the feet of young man named Saul.** This is the first mention of the man who was to be the greatest of all Christian leaders, but who at this time was a bigoted Pharisee, active in his zeal against the hated sect of the Nazarenes.

60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

59. **And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord.** This is the first prayer to the risen Jesus of which we have any record. It was doubtless uttered during the pause before the stoning when, according to Jewish custom, the man to be stoned was urged to confess his sins to God before the execution. **And saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.** He was standing there by the throne of God, as Stephen saw, all ready to receive him.

60. **And he kneeled down, and cried in a loud voice.** He wished his enemies to hear him, and all the crowd of onlookers. This prayer was a glorious Christian testimony, a great sermon in itself. **Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.** Perhaps Stephen had heard Christ on the cross pray for his enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." At any rate, he must have learned of that beautiful prayer of the Saviour.

*Illustration.* When Dr. Joseph Parker was quite young an infidel asked him, "What did God do for Stephen?" implying that God should have saved him from the cruel death. Parker answered nobly, "What did God do for him? He gave him the power to pray for the forgiveness of those who stoned him."

**And when he had said this, he fell asleep.** Surrounded by the screaming mob, pelted by the merciless stones, covered with cruel, bleeding wounds, yet he "fell asleep." Thus calm and peaceful, under whatever circumstances of rage and turmoil, is the Christian's departure to be with his Lord. So Christians call the burying-grounds "cemeteries," which means "sleeping-places."

Paul's Share in the Tragedy. We are told (Acts 8:1) that Saul (Paul) made no protest against the execution of Stephen, but "consented" to it, and perhaps even urged it on. Very likely Saul was a member of the synagogue of Cilicia, since he came from Tarsus in that province, and was one of those who had debated with Stephen and had been defeated by him. Years afterward, when Paul himself, not far from the place where Stephen was slain, spoke to the mob that was clamoring for his blood, this terrible scene flashed before his eyes, and he confessed that Stephen's blood was upon him (Acts 22:20). Indeed, must not Luke have obtained this account from his great patient, Paul himself? "Paul spent his life in the constant endeavor to be with painful effort what Stephen was." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.* Doubtless Stephen's words and conduct burned themselves upon the apostle's memory and had a permanent influence upon his life. Such a seed-sowing was of itself enough to crown with glory the career of the first martyr.

The Spirit of Stephen in the Modern Church. "Stephen reminds us of a cloud, not specially distinguished from its companions, which has helped to form the leaden covering of the sky during an overcast afternoon; we had not noted it, indeed, the sun had set without even touching it; but when the orb of day has passed beneath the horizon, the cloud catches its departing rays, and becomes saturated and steeped with fire. See how it burns with glory! Its very heart is turned to flame! So Stephen caught the glory of the departed Lord, and, reflecting it, was transformed into the same image." — *F. B. Meyer.* The church of Christ should be filled with lives thus transformed.

"Such men as Stephen are constantly needed by the church. The age in which we live is crying out for teachers who have faith to lay hold of the essentials of religion, and present them in their attractions to the world, caring little for the forms in which it has sometimes been clothed, and too often disguised." — *Principal Alfred Rowland, D.D.*

"We may have our splendid churches, beautiful and well appointed; we may have our music which will charm the ear and delight the heart; we may have eloquence in the pulpit, and culture and respectability in the pews; but all will be in vain in fulfilling the great purpose for which the church exists, unless the divine magnetism of the heavenly atmosphere which Stephen breathed is vitally present in our hearts and lives." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

"What Christ's first martyr did in the strength and after the pattern of Christ, that by his strength we too may do. In the midst of our common duties we may look heavenwards, and God will give us work to do for him; in the midst of our common trials we may look heavenwards, and God will reveal his Son to us in clearer form and lovelier beauty." — *Bishop Westcott.*

## LESSON IX (22). — August 26.

## BARNABAS THE GREAT-HEARTED. — Acts 4 : 36, 37; 9 : 26–30; 11 : 19–30; 12 : 25; 13 : 1—15 : 12, 35–41; Gal. 2 : 13.

**PRINT Acts 4 : 36, 37; 11 : 19-30.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.* — Acts 11 : 24.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 96 : 1–10.
**Primary Topic** : Barnabas and Paul Tell about Jesus.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 14 : 8–18.
**Memory Verse**: We . . . bring you good tidings. Acts 14 : 15.
**Junior Topic** : How Barnabas Helped the Church.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 4 : 36, 37; 11 : 19–30.
**Memory Verse** : Acts 11 : 24.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : How Barnabas Showed His Generous Spirit.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : Christian Characteristics Illustrated by Barnabas.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** study Barnabas in the very striking scene of the sacrifice at Lystra, stopping short of the stoning. They will get a picture of a Christian earnest for the truth and eager to tell all men about Christ, no matter what might be the consequences to himself.

**The Junior Classes** will make a study of Barnabas the helper, learning of his generosity in the matter of the field, in the introduction of Saul to the Jerusalem church, in teaching the Antioch Gentiles about Christ, and in carrying relief to the famine-stricken Christians of Jerusalem. The Juniors will be led to think of the helpful deeds they may themselves do in church, school, and home.

**The Older Classes** will review all that is known about Barnabas, gaining the inspiration of his fine qualities and being warned to avoid his over-conservatism and his proneness to agree with others even sometimes when they were in the wrong. There is much in the character of Barnabas to suggest profitable discussion.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Barnabas gives his field, A.D. 30. Barnabas vouches for Paul in Jerusalem, A.D. 38. Barnabas and Saul take famine relief to Jerusalem, A.D. 44 or 45. Barnabas and Paul, the first foreign missionaries, A.D. 47. Barnabas and Paul at the Jerusalem council, A.D. 50. Barnabas and Paul go on separate missions, A.D. 50.

**Place.** — Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, Asia Minor.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Barnabas's definite services to the early church.
Strength and weakness in the character of Barnabas.
Barnabas and Paul contrasted.
Christianity in Cyprus.
How Barnabas supplemented Paul.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : How Barnabas Helped the Church.**

I. Barnabas the Giver, Acts 4 : 36, 37.
- Gifts to the church.
- The contrast of Ananias and Sapphira.
- Barnabas vouches for Saul, Acts 9 : 26–30.

II. Barnabas the Christian Leader, Acts 11 : 19–30; 12 : 25.
- Evangelizing Antioch.
- Bringing Saul into the work.
- Carrying relief to Jerusalem.

III. Barnabas the Missionary, Acts 13 : 1—15 : 12, 35–41; Gal. 2 : 13.
- Ordained by the Holy Spirit.
- Aiding Paul's labors.
- Sharing Paul's dangers.
- With Paul in Jerusalem.
- Choosing Peter rather than Paul.
- Choosing Mark rather than Paul.
- What in Barnabas we are to imitate.

### THE LESSON IN ART.

Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, by Raphael (drawing in South Kensington Museum, London, and tapestry in the Vatican).

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Whyte's *Bible Characters*. Wilson's *The Church We Forget*. Miller's *Devotional Hours*. Dudley's *St. Paul's Friendships and His Friends*. Hunter's *John Mark*. Redlich's *St. Paul and His Companions*. Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*. Banks's *Paul and His Friends* (on Mark). Adeney (in *Men of the New Testament*). Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord*. Ryley's *Barnabas*. Mackay's *Bible Types of Modern Men*. *Commentaries* on the Acts by Furneaux, Rackham, Erdman, Gilbert, Lumby, Bartlet, etc Boyd's *Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson, Second Series*. Newbolt's *Words of Exhortation*.

ACTS 4 : 36. And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Bär′-nă-băs (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Çy′-prŭs by race,

37. Having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

I. **BARNABAS THE GENEROUS**, Acts 4 : 36, 37. Barnabas is first mentioned in connection with the "community of goods" "which for a time was practised by the church in Jerusalem. It might seem at first thought that the entire church membership had a common purse, and from this narrative many have argued for 'communism' as being truly Christian and apostolic. A more careful reading of all the statements shows that the 'community of goods' was purely local, temporary, occasional, and voluntary. It was practised only in Jerusalem, and not in the other cities of the empire, and there only for a time. It was not observed by all Christians even in Jerusalem, in the sense that all their possessions were sold and placed in a common fund. These believers 'were of one heart and soul,' that is the important point; and when any necessity arose they were quite willing to sell houses and lands and to place the money 'at the apostles' feet,' that distribution might be made 'according as any one had need.' From this paragraph, therefore, it is not well to argue against the right of private ownership to-day, nor to seek to establish any particular economic theory." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.*

36. **And Joseph.** Though this name was not used, it was fitting for the man, since the Joseph of the Old Testament was also a blameless, generous, noble character. **Who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas.** It seems to have been a rather frequent custom to rename those who became Christians, as Simon was called Peter, and Saul became Paul, perhaps to emphasize the change from the old life to the new. (**Which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation.**) That is, Inheritor of the gift of hortatory preaching, the name being given him because he possessed the gift of eloquence, a talent which made him an especially fit missionary companion for Paul. He is always called Barnabas, never Joseph, in the Acts. Luke gives this interpretation because he is writing the Acts for Theophilus, a Greek, who probably had no knowledge of Hebrew names and their meanings. **A Levite.** Trained, therefore, in the Jewish law, and able to explain and enforce it, a peculiarly valuable addition to the Christian church in those days when it was recruited largely from the Jews. No other Levite is mentioned by name in the New Testament. **A man of Cyprus by race.** Cyprus is a large island in the eastern Mediterranean. He may have been a resident of Cyprus at the time and his field may have been there; or, both the field and his house may have been in Jerusalem. There were many Jews in Cyprus, and the famous island produced some of the earliest Christian evangelists (Acts 11 : 20). Cyprus was one of the places to which the Christians fled when driven from Jerusalem in the persecution which followed the death of Stephen.

Cyprus and Adjoining Mainland.

37. **Having a field, sold it.** "The fact that Levites according to the ancient law (Deut. 10 : 9) had no portion in Israel among their brethren was not regarded, in

Acts 11 : 19. They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœ-nĭ′-cĭ-à, and Çў′-prŭs, and Ăn′-tĭ-ŏch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews.

Jeremiah's time, as debarring priests from the ownership of land (see Jer. 32 : 7–12), nor was it in the first century, for Josephus tells us that he was a priest and also owned lands near Jerusalem (*Vita*, I. 76)." — *Prof. George H. Gilbert.* **And brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.** We are not told why this act of generosity was singled out. It may have been the first deed of the kind, the one that set the fashion. Or, it may be mentioned because Barnabas afterwards became so well known. Or, some unknown circumstances of special sacrifice may have attended the gift. The money was laid at the feet of the apostles because it was given to the church, of which they were the representative leaders, and to Christ, whose apostles they were.

The Contrast of Ananias and Sapphira. This man and his wife sold some possession of theirs, — land or house or other property, — and they also laid the money at the apostles' feet ; but there was this essential difference between their act and that of Barnabas : they kept back part of the money. No one would have blamed them if they had said outright what they were doing ; but they pretended to be giving the whole, while they were in reality giving only a part. They were liars and hypocrites, false to God and traitors to the most sacred of all causes. If their sudden death seems to us to be too severe a punishment, we do not at all realize the

Coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

deadly nature of their offence. They had already chosen spiritual death, compared with which the death of the body is as nothing. But Barnabas had chosen the truth, which is the Way of Life.

Barnabas Vouches for Saul, Acts 9 : 26–30. It is no wonder that Saul, when he visited Jerusalem after his conversion, was received by the Christians with cold suspicion. That the fierce Jewish persecutor should become a Nazarene seemed too much to believe. Was it not all a stratagem to work himself into their councils and betray them later ?

Then it was that the generous Barnabas proved his generosity once more by coming forward and vouching for Saul. Cyprus is so near Cilicia that Barnabas may have known Saul before this ; indeed, the two young men may have met in the famous schools of Tarsus.

" Barnabas not only receives Paul and believes in his conversion, but he does so at his own expense. There is no reason to doubt that he recognized from the first that Paul would to a certain extent supplant him. The beauty of his character is seen in the gracious spirit with which he allowed himself to be eclipsed by a younger man." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

II. **BARNABAS THE CHRISTIAN LEADER**, Acts 11 : 19–30 ; 12 : 25. We have seen that Barnabas was true-hearted in times of peace ; now we are to observe his bearing in a period of storm and stress.

19. **They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen.** This fierce persecution (Acts 8 : 3, 4) was headed by Saul and was very terrible. It ravaged the church, entering every house of the Christians, and

20. But there were some of them, men of Çȳ′-prŭs and Çȳ-rē′-nĕ, wh when they were come to Ăn′-tĭ-ŏċh, spake unto the Greeks also, preachin the Lord Jesus.

21. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.

22. And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Bär′-nă-băs as far as Ăn′-tĭ-ŏċh:

---

dragging women as well as men into the vile prisons that were a disgrace of those times. The result was what the persecutors might have expected, an immense growth of Christianity as its followers were forced out into other lands, always preaching Christ as they went. Thus always "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." **Travelled as far as Phœnicia**. The famous old seashore country northwest of Galilee, Tyre and Sidon being its chief cities. We get a hint of this Phœnician evangelism as Paul travels to Jerusalem for the last time and finds Christians in Tyre on the way (Acts 21 : 4), and as, taken as prisoner to Rome, he is comforted by Christians in Sidon (Acts 27 : 3). **And Cyprus**. It is pleasant to believe that Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, hastened back home to tell the good news to his relatives and friends. **And Antioch**. The leader of the migration to Antioch may well have been Nicholas, one of the seven deacons, who came from the famous Syrian city, which was to become the Jerusalem of Gentile Christianity. **Speaking the word to none save only to Jews**. The Samaritans before this had heard the gospel from Philip, who also had been led by the Spirit to preach to the Ethiopian treasurer ; but, in general, the time was not ripe for the evangelization of any but Jews, who were fitted by all their history, as well as by their spiritual longings and religious training, to receive the good news of salvation through the Son of God.

20. **But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene**. Cyrene was a famous city in north Africa. Other Christians had preceded them to Antioch, but had confined their work to the Jews. **Who, when they were come to Antioch**. The metropolis of Syria under the Macedonian Greek dynasty. The surroundings in that great Greek city would be very different from those in Jerusalem, and would tend to broaden their minds and sympathies. **Spake unto the Greeks also**. That is, to all non-Jews, whether they spoke Greek or Latin or some other tongue. The step was one of vital importance.

Antioch in Syria.

We are so familiar with such preaching that we cannot realize its revolutionary character when first practised. We must remember the non-missionary ages that had gone before. **Preaching the Lord Jesus**. That God had become incarnated in a man, that he had spoken words of great love and had done many loving miracles, and had crowned his proof of the love of God by dying the sacrificial death of the cross. When the marvel and beauty of all this seizes on any soul, it cannot help proclaiming it to all that will listen.

21. **And the hand of the Lord was with them**. God's hand is spoken of as representing himself, especially his power. **And a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.** They believed the truth about Jesus, and turned to him by confessing his name, doing his will, and telling others about him. True belief always works itself out in the life.

22. **And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem.** That is, news that Christianity was spreading to the Greeks, and was

23. Who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord:

24. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25. And he went forth to Tär′-sŭs to seek for Saul;

26. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Ăn′-tĭ-ŏċh. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Ăn′-tĭ-ŏċh.

27. Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Ăn′-tĭ-ŏċh.

28. And there stood up one of them named Ăg′-ă-bŭs, and signified by

---

no longer merely a Jewish religion — startling and glorious news to the fathers of the church. **And they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch.** Very likely Barnabas himself suggested the mission. Note that they did not think the matter important enough to send one of the apostles, but they were indeed wise in sending a man who by his foreign birth was fitted to sympathize with the new movement and to give it kindly and wise leadership.

23. **Who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad.** It is not said that he gave to the work the approval of the Jerusalem church, for that is taken for granted. It was enough that the work was manifestly born of God's grace; what Christian could be other than glad of it? **And he exhorted them all.** Thus justifying his surname, Barnabas, Son of Exhortation. **That with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.** That is the exhortation to be given to all that start out in the Christian life: "Your feet have been placed in the right way; just keep on in it!"

24. **For he was a good man.** "The author, or the source from which he drew, seems to have felt that not every man would have taken the same view of the work in Antioch that Barnabas took." — *Prof. George H. Gilbert.* Goodness, kindness of heart, is needed to overcome prejudice and bigotry. **And full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.** "He was full of the Holy Spirit, and so was able to recognize the presence of the Spirit when he saw it; was full of faith, and so was prepared to carry out the work without misgivings as to consequences." — *Dean Furneaux.* **And much people was added unto the Lord.** The result was inevitable; people always flock to a church that shows the spirit of the church at Antioch.

25. **And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul.** Perhaps Saul, after leaving Jerusalem, had gone straight to his own home in Tarsus, to tell his relatives about Christ; at any rate Tarsus was the natural place in which to start looking for him.

26. **And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch.** As he had introduced Saul at Jerusalem, so he introduced him at Antioch. Barnabas was not so foolish as to try to do a great work by himself, that all the glory might be his. He knew that such a spirit would destroy all his glory, and that all his credit would come from an unselfish, whole-hearted regard for the welfare of Christ's church. **And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church.** They worked for a year in and with the church at Antioch, not reaching out beyond it in any missionary operations. The Holy Spirit would have them first establish firmly a fulcrum on which they could rest the missionary lever. **And taught much people.** Newly come out of heathenism, how much those Christians needed to learn and experience before they could safely be left to themselves! Every missionary in a heathen land faces this necessity of carefully instructing his converts. **And that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.** Thus the great name was born in heathendom, and probably originated in derision just as "Methodist" did. Thus probably Saul and Barnabas were called Christians before John or Peter or James.

27. **Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.** "These days" refers to the year of instruction just described. Prophets were teachers or seers or both; here they were seers, foretelling the future.

28. **And there stood up one of them named Agabus.** "There was some especial gathering of the church, perhaps for the paschal festival." — *R. B. Rackham.* **And signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world.** After

the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Cläu'-dĭ-ŭs.

29. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa:

30. Which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Bär'-nă-băs and Saul.

---

the fashion of many of the ancient prophets, Agabus illustrated his prophecy by a sign or symbol (he "signified" it), just as some years afterwards he bound his own hands and feet with Paul's girdle to signify that Paul was to suffer imprisonment (Acts 21 : 11). **Which came to pass in the days of Claudius.** The reign of that Roman emperor (A.D. 41–54) was marked by many famines in many widely separated regions.

29. **And the disciples, every man according to his ability.** This is the measure of true giving — not what others give or ask for, but our ability to give. **Determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa.** The famine may have already begun in Judæa; Josephus tells of a famine in that country in A.D. 44–48.

30. **Which also they did.** "The disciples of Antioch, equally threatened with others, thought only of sending relief to Judæa." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.* **Sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.** The Jewish synagogues had elders who conducted the affairs of the synagogue, and it seems that the Christian church had by this time adopted the institution, adding it to the office of deacon. Here we have another example of the helpfulness of Barnabas and his practical efficiency as a Christian leader; and note that he is named ahead of Saul.

Luke passes over in silence the events of this journey to Jerusalem, but describes the persecution under Herod Agrippa I. which occurred at the time, with the miraculous release of Peter from prison, and the story of the prayer meeting at the house of Mary the mother of Mark. This Mark (who afterwards wrote the second Gospel) Barnabas and Saul took with them when they returned to Antioch (Acts 12 : 25).

III. **BARNABAS THE MISSIONARY**, Acts 13 : 1—15 : 12, 35–41; Gal. 2 : 13. Ordained by the Holy Spirit. After his return to Antioch there came to Barnabas the great honor of his life, his choice as one of the two first foreign missionaries of the Christian church. He was thought of as the leading missionary, at first, and is named before Saul. He, with Saul, was selected from a noble company of prophets and teachers. The inauguration of the foreign missionary enterprise followed public worship and private fasting and prayer, an atmosphere out of which all progress of missions has since grown. The entire event was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Of this the immediate participants were made conscious at the time, and the glorious results, at once and through the centuries, have abundantly proved that it was of God.

Aiding Paul's Labors. Barnabas was Saul's right-hand man throughout his first missionary tour, in Cyprus and Asia Minor. While Mark — the cousin or nephew of Barnabas — attended to the secular details of the journey, the food and lodging, Barnabas shared the preaching and helped to instruct the converts. We have an abstract of one of Paul's sermons preached on this journey, but not of any sermon by Barnabas, though doubtless he lived up to his name and was a "Son of Exhortation." Doubtless also his winsome qualities, his tact and sympathy and kindly helpfulness, made him peculiarly valuable and efficient in private conversations. In most places Barnabas is joined with Paul in joint reference to their speaking, but there are hints throughout that in this field Barnabas soon became subsidiary to Paul, if he was not from the start; and at Lystra it is expressly said that Paul was the chief speaker, being therefore dubbed "Mercury," the god of oratory. Barnabas, however, evidently the taller of the two, a man of majestic figure and bearing, was named "Jupiter," the chief of the gods. In this connection also there is a return to the order, "Barnabas and Paul," with which Luke had started the account, though after the blinding of Elymas it became "Paul and Barnabas" almost uniformly.

Sharing Paul's Dangers. The defection of John Mark at Perga, at the approach to the difficult highland region of Asia Minor, emphasizes to our understanding the perils of the route — perils of sickness in malarial regions, perils of flooded and angry streams, perils of robbers in deep and dark glens, perils of hostile mobs in

the semi-savage and superstitious cities. In all this Barnabas was a tower of strength to Paul. Steadily on he went, bold in his spirit when the occasion called for boldness, courageous and cheerful in persecution, serene and strong in his Christian faith. Why he escaped stoning with Paul at Lystra we are not told; perhaps he was too mild to be regarded as dangerous to the heathen religion; more likely he was not with Paul at the time. But that tragic event made no difference in his allegiance. On he went with his suffering leader to Derbe, where they made many disciples, and then he did not hesitate to go back with Paul over the same route, even to Lystra where Paul had been stoned, and to Iconium, from which they had both been driven. He had indeed an honorable story to tell when the two missionaries made their report to the church at Antioch.

With Paul in Jerusalem. Barnabas was involved with Paul in the controversy which arose at Antioch with the Jewish Christians from Judæa who insisted on circumcision for the Gentile converts to Christianity, and he was one of the delegation which went to Jerusalem to thresh out the matter there. It may well be supposed that he, with his conciliatory spirit and his great influence with the Christians of Jerusalem,

Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. Raphael.

(From the tapestry designed for the Sistine Chapel, Rome.) (Cartoon in South Kensington Museum, London.)

was the most useful man in this crisis. He could speak more eloquently than Paul of the great success of the first missionary tour, since that success was chiefly due to Paul. Indeed, it is significant that in this connection the customary order is reversed, and Luke has it "Barnabas and Paul" as at the beginning. How much of the wise compromise which was formulated by James was due to the reconciling tact of Barnabas we do not know, but we can see his hand in it; nor must we fail to notice that when James refers to the two as "our beloved Barnabas and Paul," he places Barnabas first.

Choosing Peter Rather than Paul. An interesting sequel to the Jerusalem council is given by Paul in Gal. 2:11–14. It seems that after Paul's return to Antioch with Barnabas, Peter (Cephas, as Paul calls him) visited Antioch, and, in harmony with the spirit of the Jerusalem decision and the teachings of the vision which God granted him in Joppa, ate with the Gentiles; but when other Christians came "from James," representing the stricter division of the church, Peter thought better of his liberality and refused longer to associate thus freely with the Gentile Christians. Thus he made a schism in the church at Antioch, and "even Barnabas," as Paul wrote sadly, went with Peter and opposed in this matter the liberty-loving Paul. It is plain that Barnabas was a conservative, and was afraid of trusting himself, even under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, too far from the ancient ways of Judaism.

CHOOSING MARK RATHER THAN PAUL. Of course we all regret that Paul and Barnabas found it necessary to separate, but we are all glad that each was manly enough to adhere to what he considered right, though the dearest ties must be broken. Each had a good reason in the matter of John Mark, and the reason was characteristic of each. "He failed the cause," said Paul, "he turned back in the face of danger. We can't risk him again in a place of responsibility." "But he's sorry and ashamed," said generous Barnabas. "He'll do better the second time. Give him a chance to make good." But Paul placed the cause of Christ above all personal considerations, and insisted that Mark should prove himself in a less conspicuous and important task; so he took Silas for his companion and set off on that glorious journey which brought the gospel to Europe. Barnabas, sad-hearted, took Mark and went off to his own Cyprus, which he doubtless evangelized thoroughly. And Barnabas proved right in his contention, as the way of generous confidence in one's fellows always is right; for Mark came to be a notable worker for Christ, heartily commended by Paul in no fewer than three of his Epistles. Moreover, Paul's references to Barnabas in his letters show that those great leaders were still friends, though on this occasion they agreed to differ as strong men sometimes must.

"How candid, straightforward, and above-board is the writer of the Acts! There is no glossing over this discreditable fact of the quarrel between Paul and Barnabas." — *Rev. A. K. H. Boyd.*

WHAT IN BARNABAS WE ARE TO IMITATE. "To have the heart to discover a more talented man than yourself, and then to have the heart to go to Tarsus for him, and to make way for him in Antioch, is far better than to have all Saul's talents, and all the praise and all the rewards of those talents to yourself. I would far rather have a little of Barnabas's grace than have all of Saul's genius." — *Alexander Whyte.*

"It is not often that the Bible pays compliments. The Book says Barnabas was a good man. Goodness is better than greatness. When Walter Scott was dying, he said to a friend who stood by him, 'Be a good man.'" — *J. R. Miller.*

"Without the sternness of St. Paul, John Mark would never have learned to endure; without the tenderness of St. Barnabas, he might have fallen away in despair." — *Canon Newbolt.*

Barnabas was above all generous: generous in his possessions, generous with his sympathies, generous with his time and strength and talents. He comes on the scene giving, and he is giving to the end. The church will never see the time when such men are not needed above all others.

## LESSON X (23). — September 2.

## PAUL THE APOSTLE. — Acts 7:54—8:3; 9:1–31; 11:25–30; 13—28; Phil. 3:4–14.

**PRINT Acts 22:3, 6–10; Phil. 3:7–14.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* — PHIL. 3:14.

**Devotional Reading**: Isa. 6:1–8.
**Reference Material**: Rom. 1:9–17; 15:15–21; 2 Cor. 11:1—12:10; 2 Tim. 4.
**Primary Topic**: HOW PAUL BECAME A CHRISTIAN.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 22:3–16. Print vs. 6–16.
**Memory Verse**: What shall I do, Lord? Acts 22:10.
**Junior Topic**: PAUL THE MISSIONARY.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 22:3–16; Phil. 3:7–14. Print Acts 22:3, 6–10; Phil. 3:7–14.
**Memory Verse**: Rom. 1:16.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: PAUL THE DAUNTLESS.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: PAUL'S CONTRIBUTION TO CHRISTIANITY.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will study the account of Paul's conversion to Christianity, the striking scene on the Damascus road and the great change in Saul's life. Get the pupils to tell what changes Christ will make in their lives also.

**The Junior Classes** will get some

broader conception than they have yet gained of the great work of Paul as a missionary They will pass over the various journeys of Paul in swift review, will think of their difficulties and of what was accomplished in spite of those difficulties, and will gain from the study some inspiration to work and pray for missions.

**The Intermediate and Senior Classes** will center their thought on the courage of Paul, bringing up examples of it from all parts of his life, and telling how in their own lives they can imitate the boldness of the great apostle in his Christian work.

**The Young People and Adults** will survey Paul's life in all its many aspects, gaining a complete view of his contributions to Christianity through his personal experience and character, his speeches, his writings, his friendships, his travels, and his work as an organizer. It is a most fruitful and glorious theme.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Paul was converted probably A.D. 36 ; his appointment as missionary, A.D. 47 ; his first missionary journey, A.D. 47–49 ; his second missionary journey, A.D. 50–52 ; his third missionary journey, A.D. 53–57 ; his imprisonment in Cæsarea, A.D. 58, 59 ; his first imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 61, 62 ; his second imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 66 ; his martyrdom, A.D. 67.

**Place.** — Tarsus, Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achaia, Malta, Rome ; perhaps Spain.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul's conversion and what it meant.
Paul as a writer.
Paul as an orator.
Paul the traveller.
Paul the missionary and evangelist.
Paul the friend.
Paul the church organizer.
Paul the theologian.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Many-Sided Paul.**

I. PAUL THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER, Acts 22 : 3, 6–10 ; 7 : 54—8 : 3 ; 9 : 1–31.
Paul's education.
Paul's rage against the Christians.
Paul's wonderful conversion.

II. PAUL THE PIONEER MISSIONARY, Acts 11 : 25–30 ; 13—28.
The first missionary journey.
The council at Jerusalem.
The second missionary journey.
The third missionary journey.
The imprisonment in Cæsarea.
The voyage to Rome.
Paul's closing years.

III. PAUL, GREAT IN MANY WAYS, Phil. 3 : 7–14.
His personal character.
His friends.
His writings.
His theology.
His travels.
His addresses.
His church organization.
His missionary zeal.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

Paul, by Burne-Jones. Paul with Barnabas at Lystra, by Raphael. Paul Preaching at Athens, by Raphael.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Rosser's *Paul the Preacher*. David Smith's *Life and Letters of Paul*. Banks's *Paul and His Friends*. Faris's *The Christian According to Paul*. Greene's *The Many-Sided Paul*. Rufus M. Jones's *St. Paul the Hero*. Dudley's *St. Paul's Friendships and His Friends*. Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*. Redlich's *Paul and His Companions*. Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. Fouard's *St. Paul and His Missions*. Ligon's *Paul the Apostle*. Bacon's *Jesus and Paul* and *The Story of St. Paul*. Howson's *The Character of Paul*. Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul*. Selden's *In the Time of Paul*. Weinel's *St. Paul, the Man and His Work*. Speer's *The Man Paul*. Abbott's *The Life and Letters of Paul*. Wood's *Life and Ministry of Paul*. Jones's *St. Paul the Orator*. Burrell's *Paul's Campaigns, Paul's Letters, Paul's Companions*. Whyte's *The Apostle Paul*. Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Paul*. Lyttelton's *Conversion of St. Paul*. Buell's *Autographs of St. Paul*. Gardner's *The Religious Experience of St. Paul*. Hall's *Paul the Apostle*. Stalker's *Life of St. Paul*. Edwards-Cutler's *A Life at Its Best*. Robertson's *Paul's Joy in Christ*. Knowling's *The Testimony of St. Paul to Christ*. Baring-Gould's *A Study of St. Paul*. Bird's *Paul of Tarsus*. Atkinson's *Paul of Tarsus*. Many works by Ramsay. Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul*. Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. Lewin's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. Taylor's *Paul the Missionary*. Wilkinson's *Epic of Saul* and *Epic of Paul*. Commentaries on the Acts and the Pauline Epistles.

ACTS 22 : 3. I am a Jew, born in Tär′-sŭs of Çĭ-lĭ′-ci-à, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gă-mā′-lĭ-ĕl, instructed according to the strict

I. **PAUL, THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER,** Acts 22 : 3, 6–10 ; 7 : 54—8 : 3 ; 9 : 1–31. *Paul's Education.* 3. **I am a Jew.** We have in Paul's own words three summaries of the life of the greatest of the apostles, and this is the first. It was spoken on the stairway leading from the temple court to the military stronghold, the Castle of Antonia, to which Paul was being taken by Roman soldiers who had just rescued him from a fanatical Jewish mob. Paul asked permission to address the mob, and spoke

manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day.

6. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Dă-măs'-cŭs, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

---

to them in Hebrew (that is, the Aramaic dialect of Hebrew then used in Palestine). In beginning with the statement that he was a Jew Paul was true to his own feelings, for he claimed to be a "Hebrew of the Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5). He was, however, a native of the Greek province of Cilicia in Asia Minor, and was charged by the Jews with bringing Greeks into the temple. Moreover, the Roman soldiers had taken him to be a certain Egyptian who had just led an insurrection. Merely by stating that he was a Jew, Paul corrected these misimpressions. **Born in Tarsus of Cilicia.** Cilicia, in the southeastern corner of Asia Minor, was the portion nearest to Palestine. Tarsus was one of its chief places, and was "no mean city." **Brought up in this city.** Paul was not trained in Greek learning, as might have been thought from his foreign birth, but as soon as he was old enough his parents sent him to Jerusalem to be educated as a Jewish rabbi. **At the feet of Gamaliel.** It was customary in Paul's day for both teacher and pupils to be seated during the recitation or lecture, but the teacher sat on a platform elevated above the pupil. Gamaliel was a famous teacher of the law, grandson of another famous teacher, the renowned Hillel. His wise moderation in regard to the apostles is recorded in Acts 5:33–40. **Instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers.** Paul was a Pharisee, belonging to the strictest of the Jewish sects. They were zealous to observe the laws of Moses in all their details, and had added to them almost countless minute requirements which had become very burdensome. They were, however, in great favor with the people because they were ardent patriots, and bitterly opposed to the Roman rulers of the country. **Being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day.** This passion for the service of God is the keynote of Paul's character; he had only to realize that a course of conduct was in accordance with God's will, and he would follow it to the death. He was speaking to Jews who were equally ardent in following their consciences, but their consciences were misled by prejudice and were wholly unsafe guides.

PAUL'S RAGE AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS. After completing his education as a rabbi Paul must have returned to Cilicia, for it is impossible that he could have been in Palestine during Christ's ministry and not have been associated with it as a friend or enrolled against it. We must suppose that he returned to Jerusalem soon after Christ's crucifixion, learned of the growth of Christianity from his Pharisaic friends, and was at once filled with zeal to destroy this new foe to the faith which he held dearer than life. Stephen was one of the most aggressive of the Christians, and Paul may have been a rabbi in the Synagogue of the Cilicians where Stephen argued for Christianity, defeating his opponents. When Stephen was stoned to death, it was at Paul's feet that the witnesses that cast the first stones laid down their coats. Paul was promoted to the Sanhedrin, perhaps because of his zeal on this occasion, and in that tribunal gave his vote against the Christians. The authorities were bent on exterminating Christianity, and placed the savage work in Paul's hands. "Terrible were the scenes which ensued. He flew from synagogue to synagogue and from house to house, dragging forth men and women, who were cast into prison and punished. Some appear to have been put to death, and, darkest trait of all, others were compelled to blaspheme the name of the Saviour. The church at Jerusalem was broken in pieces, and its members who escaped the rage of the persecutor were scattered over the neighboring provinces and countries." — *James Stalker.* At last Paul set out to Damascus, having heard that some of the Christians had taken refuge in that distant city.

PAUL'S WONDERFUL CONVERSION. 6. **And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey.** "He set forth, attended by a band of the Sanhedrin's officers. His route is uncertain. He might hold northward and, passing through Samaria, cross the Jordan by the ford of Bethshean; or he might cross by the southern ford of Bethany near Jericho and travel northward through Peræa and Batanæa. It was probably the latter route that he adopted, since it was the shorter, making the journey about a hundred and forty miles; and if, as the narrative seems to indicate, he travelled on foot, it would occupy at the customary rate over a week." — *Prof. David Smith.*

7. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8. And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Dă-măs′-cŭs; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

**And drew nigh unto Damascus.** Damascus was a splendid city, and is still, though the oldest city in the world, a place of importance. Its many roofs and towers amid its embowering trees make a beautiful sight, bursting suddenly upon the traveller as he journeys from the south. **About noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.** Eastern travellers usually rest during the hot noon; Saul may have been pressing on to reach Damascus before the Sabbath. This light was supernatural, "above the brightness of the sun" (Acts 26 : 13).

7. **And I fell unto the ground.** So did all his companions, Acts 26 : 14. **And heard a voice saying unto me.** Speaking (Acts 26 : 14) in Hebrew, that is, Aramaic.

Scene of Paul's Conversion, near Damascus.

"Probably Aramaic, not Greek, was the language in which Saul habitually thought." — *Furneaux.* **Saul, Saul.** "Shaoul, Shaoul" in the original, for Paul was called Saul at this time. Our Lord was in the habit of repeating names thus in moments of strong feeling: "Martha, Martha" (Luke 10 : 41); "Simon, Simon" (Luke 22 : 31), "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem" (Matt. 23 : 3). **Why persecutest thou me?** "The question was a simple one, but it contained an overwhelming revelation. In Stephen, in the hapless Nazarenes, Saul had been persecuting the Messiah himself, 'the Lord of the glory.'" — *R. B. Rackham.*

8. **And I answered, Who art thou, Lord?** "Lord" indicates Saul's recognition of the voice as authoritative. "It indicates a purpose to follow the voice, whether it was that of an angel or of God himself." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.** "Nazarene," springing from the despised Galilean village, was a badge of dishonor. Now it flashes into a token of glory.

9. **And they that were with me beheld indeed the light.** It shone "round about" them, Acts 26 : 13. They did not, however, see the glorious Form in the midst of the light. **But they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.** The voice they heard (Acts 9 : 7) must have been Saul's voice, holding what seemed to them a one-sided and incomprehensible conversation (David Smith).

10. **And I said, What shall I do, Lord?** A question characteristic of the Pharisee, with his emphasis on deeds of merit. **And the Lord said unto me, Arise.** Saul could

do nothing prone upon the earth. **And go into Damascus.** Which Saul had thought to enter in such different fashion. **And there it shall be told thee all things which are appointed for thee to do.** The implication is that Saul had much to do for Christ, and that these many deeds were in God's plan for him ; but Saul was amazed and confused ; he needed to readjust his entire system of thought before he could grasp God's designs for him. Such a mental and spiritual transformation required time. Therefore the transformed persecutor, blinded, humbled, amazed, in unutterable confusion, was led into Damascus, lodging at the house of a certain Judas. After three days of intense meditation and prayer in the darkness, the Lord sent a Christian to him to restore his sight (though not perfectly), and to announce his great work as a preacher of Christianity.

II. **PAUL, THE PIONEER MISSIONARY**, Acts 11 : 25–30 ; 13—28. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY. We know that three years after Paul's conversion were spent in thoughtful meditation in " Arabia " — possibly in Sinai of sacred memory — followed (and perhaps also preceded) by preaching in Damascus. But the Jews drove him from Damascus, and he was compelled to flee for his life, being secretly let down from the wall in a basket. Then he went to Jerusalem, where the Christians were afraid to receive their former persecutor, and admitted him to their fellowship only after Barnabas vouched for him. In two or three weeks, however, the Jews drove Paul away from Jerusalem also, and for several years he labored obscurely in his own city of Tarsus, in Cilicia. Thence he was summoned to Antioch, the Syrian capital, by his friend Barnabas, who needed his help in superintending a revival which had broken out among the Gentiles of that city, being started by Jewish Christians who had fled from Jerusalem. Here a large church was formed, the new headquarters of Christianity. Here the disciples began to be called Christians. And here the missionary zeal became so strong that Paul and Barnabas were commissioned by the Holy Spirit and the church as the first Christian missionaries to the heathen world.

Paul Let Down in a Basket.

This first missionary journey led through Barnabas's home country, the island of Cyprus, where Saul seems to have adopted his Roman name of Paul (" the Little "), and where he won to Christ the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus, working the miracle of blindness upon the imposter, Elymas. Thence to Perga in Asia Minor, where their attendant, John Mark, deserted them and returned to Jerusalem. Thence through many perils to the inland city of Pisidian Antioch, where Paul preached the first recorded missionary sermon, and won many converts, but was driven away by the bigoted Jews. On to Iconium, where they had a similar experience. Still on to Lystra, where Paul healed a cripple, and with difficulty prevented the superstitious throng from worshipping him and Barnabas as gods. At Lystra Paul was stoned, through the influence of Jews from Antioch and Iconium, and was left for dead. Greatly suffering, however, he made his way to Derbe, preached there, and then with superb heroism returned through Lystra and the other cities strengthening the churches he had founded, and so back to Antioch in Syria, where the two great missionaries reported the first missionary journey.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM. At the close of this first missionary journey Paul was confronted with the question whether the Gentiles, in becoming Christians, should first become Jews, that is, be circumcised and submit to the endless require-

ments of Jewish ritual and law. Paul had settled this question for himself and his converts in the negative, but the Antioch Christians were disturbed by delegates from Jerusalem, and so he and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to settle the matter. Thence arose the great council of Jerusalem, in which Peter, James, and John agreed with Paul and Barnabas that the Gentile Christians need not be circumcised, but should abstain from meat that had been offered in sacrifice to idols, from the licentiousness that was so common in heathenism, and from meat from which the blood had not been drained off at the time of killing. Thus the question was supposed to have been settled, but it was reopened almost immediately, and for years the Judaizing Christians made much trouble in the churches founded by Paul. Paul contended earnestly for Christian liberty, and it is good to know that he was victorious before his death. That victory gave Christianity its chance to become a world-religion.

The Second Missionary Journey. On his second missionary journey Paul carried Christianity to Europe. Since Barnabas insisted on taking Mark with him, Paul let him go to Cyprus, while he himself took Silas (and later Timothy and Luke) and went to Asia Minor, visiting the churches he had established on his first journey, extending their influence and increasing their number. Arrived at Troas in the northwest, he had a vision of a man of Macedonia calling him to come over and help them. Obedient to the vision, he journeyed to Philippi, where he converted Lydia, founded a famous church, and at last suffered imprisonment. Marvellously released by an earthquake which resulted in the conversion of his jailer, he passed on to found the church in Thessalonica. Visiting Berœa, he travelled to Athens, where he made his powerful speech on Mars' Hill, but won few converts. In Corinth, however, he remained a year and a half, establishing one of his strongest churches. Driven away by the hostility of the Jews, he made a swift visit to Jerusalem, and returned to Antioch to report the introduction of Christianity to a new continent and the evangelization of two important regions, Macedonia and Achaia.

Paul Preaching at Athens. Raphael.

The Third Missionary Journey. This journey took Paul westward again to Asia Minor, and especially to Ephesus, which important place Paul made his headquarters for three years. Finally his success aroused against him the followers of Diana, and he left for Europe, visiting Macedonia and spending a winter in Corinth. He desired to refute the critics of his liberal course with the Gentiles by proving their loyalty to Jerusalem, so he raised a considerable gift of money which he himself, with his comrades, carried to the Holy City. He travelled by way of Macedonia and along the Adriatic coast, landing at important places and greeting the Christians, and especially at Miletus bidding a touching farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus. This third journey was notable because of the stay in Ephesus, the most prolonged of all his pastorates.

The Imprisonment in Cæsarea. At Jerusalem Paul got into difficulties through his desire to please the Jews by fulfilling a vow in the temple. He was falsely charged with bringing Gentiles into the temple, a mob assailed him, he was rescued by the Roman soldiers, tried by the Sanhedrin, rescued again from Jewish violence, taken for safety to the Roman capital, Cæsarea, and there kept in prison for two years by Felix, the Roman governor, who was much under Paul's influence, but nevertheless held him a prisoner because he expected to be bribed to let him go.

During this time, perhaps, Luke, who was with him, gathered most of the materials for his Gospel and the Acts.

THE VOYAGE TO ROME. When Festus succeeded Felix he promptly gave Paul a hearing, and Paul, to avoid being sent to Jerusalem where the Jews would doubtless have procured his death, appealed to the Emperor at Rome. Therefore to Rome he went, having a stormy voyage in which he became the spiritual head of the terrified ship's company. They were shipwrecked on the island of Malta, had a remarkable experience there, and finally reached the central city of the world, which for years Paul had longed to visit. With the beginning of Paul's evangelistic work in his Roman prison the Acts closes, and with it ends the New Testament account of the greatest of the apostles.

PAUL'S CLOSING YEARS. It is thought that Paul's first imprisonment at Rome lasted about two years. On his release he seems to have revisited his beloved churches in Asia and Macedonia, leaving Timothy in charge at Ephesus and Titus in Crete. There is a credible tradition that he extended his travels as far westward as Spain. He seems to have passed his last winter in a Nicopolis, probably the one in Epirus, where he was arrested. Nero's fierce persecution of the Christians had broken out, and Paul was recognized as the chief leader of the Christians. Luke went to Rome with him, but other followers deserted him in this crisis. His first trial resulted in an acquittal, the charge being probably that he was seditious ; but he was held in prison as a Christian, and that seems to have been the only charge when he was executed. He is said to have been beheaded, as a Roman citizen, on the Ostian Way. Thus ended a career crowded with stirring incidents, enormously fruitful, and still influential in the world beyond the careers of all other mortals that the world has seen.

Paul Reaches Rome in Chains.

III. **PAUL, GREAT IN MANY WAYS**, Phil. 3 : 7–14. HIS PERSONAL CHARACTER. "Paul was conscious of a power not of himself, but ultimately of God, producing results within and without his being. Rich and rounded Christian character was, under God, one of the apostle's attainments. He was being transformed into the image of Christ by the operation of the Spirit. All that sun, rain, and fertility are to the earth, that and more was the indwelling life of God to Paul's nature, producing varied but kindred and harmonious fruits : 'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control.' Every one in that assemblage of virtues enriched his character ; and the soil of his inward being, in which they were rooted, was vitalized by a force not his own." — *John L. Rosser.*

HIS FRIENDS. "Friendship at its highest has never been better exemplified than in Paul. The partial sketch of his life history in the Acts is replete with illustrations of his singular power of attaching men to himself, of the enthusiastic devotion to him of many sorts of people, and of his magnificent helpfulness to those who claimed his regard ; and his letters not only include numerous direct references to his friends

and friendships, but also bear in every line the stamp of a nature of wondrous affectionateness. He loves easily. The objects of his regard multiply rapidly, and once interested in a particular person he seems never to forget him." — *Rev. George Francis Greene.*

His Writings. "In the Gospels we are in the atmosphere of the Galilean hills, filled with the scent of flowers and the singing of the birds. In the Pauline Epistles we are in the synagogues and the streets, and soldiers and slaves have taken the place of the bird songs and the field blossoms. Paul was almost, if not wholly, blind to natural beauties. He had a genius of spiritual insight but he had no eye for such things. It was better to be blind on this side of his nature than on the other." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes.* Paul's letters are ardent, impulsive, loving. His thought seems to leap ahead of his pen. He uses now the sword of sharp invective, now the trowel and mortar of massive logic. Sometimes he soars on wings of the loftiest eloquence. His letters are treasures of practical wisdom and of divine inspiration. They are our fundamental treatises on theology. They disclose the plan of salvation. They win men to walk with the Holy Spirit. "Paul alone of all the writers seems to me not to have written with his fingers, with pens and ink, but with the heart itself, the affection itself, and with naked nerves." — *Casaubon.* "Paul's style is himself." — *Farrar.*

Thorwaldsen.
St. Paul.

His Theology. "It is to Paul as a theologian that we rightly look with the greatest admiration. His theology took shape from the peculiar experience of his own conversion. By that sudden transition he was made to realize the impossibility of man's saving himself, the dependence of the sinner on the sovereign grace of God, and the completeness of the redeeming work which Jesus, the Son of God, had done through death and resurrection. It followed that only by union with Christ through faith can any man be saved. Paul's is emphatically the theology of faith." — *Prof. George T. Purves, D.D.* "No claim could be made for Jesus which Paul did not make. The Lord of whom he speaks with such variety of phrase filled the whole horizon of his thought and love, and was to him Saviour, Friend, King, and God. And yet in his absorbing sense of his deity Paul never lost sight of Christ's human sympathy, and he fell ever upon his mercy as the One who knows and understands." — *Robert E. Speer.*

His Travels. In 2 Cor. 11 : 23–27 Paul summarizes the hardships of his missionary life, and nearly all of the long list represents events not related in the Acts. Five beatings of thirty-nine strokes each are mentioned, and there is no other record of them; also three beatings with rods, otherwise unrecorded; also three shipwrecks, including "a night and a day in the deep," besides the one of which we know. We read of the attacks of robbers: where were they? What were the "perils in the wilderness" of which he writes? He speaks of "hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness," but we have no particulars. In truth, travel in Paul's day was hazardous at the best, and Paul's journeys took him into many regions where travel was at its worst. Moreover, Paul was feeble in body, poorly adapted to cope with these hardships save by his indomitable spirit. As it was, he travelled almost incessantly, and with magnificent results that could have been gained in no other way.

His Addresses. "The striking personality of the apostle is richly illustrated in his speeches: his unfailing tact and courtesy; his cosmopolitanism; his thoroughness; his affectionate disposition and emotional character; his sensitiveness; his conscientiousness; his strong sense of responsibility towards the church of Christ. In every case the address is admirably adapted to the occasion which evoked it. The element of artificiality is conspicuous by its absence." — *Maurice Jones.*

His Church Organization. "I am dazzled and absolutely fascinated with

PHIL. 3:7. Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.

8. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ,

9. And be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, *even* that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith:

10. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death;

---

Paul's pastoral work." — *Alexander Whyte.* It was faithful, minute, loving. Paul's converts were hand-picked. His churches were firmly founded. Paul cherished his independence, and paid his own salary by tent-making, though insisting that others should be paid. Paul was keen on the scent of heresy. Paul was stern in weeding out evil-doers. Paul was most appreciative of kindness shown himself by his churches. Paul's churches loved him with a passion of devotion. The care of all the churches weighed him down. We never can tell how much the Christian church owes to Paul the organizer.

HIS MISSIONARY ZEAL. Paul put himself remarkably into all his writings; all of them pulse with missionary zeal and high-hearted devotion. The passage chosen as a specimen of these splendid utterances was written toward the close of his life, during his first imprisonment in Rome, and was addressed to a church especially dear to him, the Christians at Philippi, the firstfruits of his European ministry, who had been lovingly faithful to him ever since their conversion.

7. **Howbeit what things were gain to me.** Paul means all the merits which he fancied he was heaping up in his proud old life as a Pharisee. **These have I counted loss for Christ.** There was much good in the zeal for the law he had shown as a Pharisee, in his activity and energy and perseverance, and his fervent loyalty to what he believed was the truth; but they stood in the way of his serving Christ, and so they worked his loss every day he held to them. When he came to know Christ, how gladly he swept away all his false reliances, to trust in the Saviour alone!

8. **Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss.** Not merely these things on which the Pharisee relied, but everything else. **For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.** "Excellency" might be translated "surpassingness" — it is the climax of all knowledge to know Jesus Christ. **For whom I suffered the loss of all things.** Saul lost, for Christ's sake, his proud position as a Jewish rabbi, his old-time friends, perhaps his inheritance and his family ties. **And do count them but refuse.** Probably the word signifies the leavings of a meal; nothing that Paul wanted; nothing that he could not do perfectly well without. **That I may gain Christ.** Christ, the fountain of all joys, the source of all wealth, the bestower of all honor, — and this he had gained in exchange for refuse!

9. **And be found in him.** Paul was hidden in Christ, safe from all calamity, safe from death, safe from the judgment day. Christ was to him "a mighty fortress." **Not having a righteousness of mine own.** Such a righteousness as he had when he was a Pharisee. **Even that which is of the law.** The Pharisee's fancied righteousness was based on his own obedience to the Mosaic law, an obedience of the outward life. **But that which is through faith in Christ.** Faith in Christ as the bestower of righteousness through the atonement which he made upon the cross. **The righteousness which is from God by faith.** "The origin of this righteousness is the Father's love; its reason and security, the Son's merits; its consequence, the Holy Spirit uniting the sinner in faith to the Son." — *Bishop Moule.*

10. **That I may know him.** That was what Paul sought above all else, to know Christ. All joy, all power, all riches, all wisdom, were involved in knowing Christ. **And the power of his resurrection.** Christ's resurrection meant to Paul the living Christ, by his side at all times, his power for all tasks. **And the fellowship of his sufferings.** Christ had said that his followers must bear the cross, as he had done. Paul, in all his many sufferings, must have been cheered continually by the thought that thus he was sharing Christ's experiences and coming into closer fellowship with

11. If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.
12. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.
13. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing *I do*, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before,
14. I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

him. **Becoming conformed unto his death.** Paul wished to share his Lord's spirit of self-sacrifice which was shown supremely in his atoning death on the cross.

11. **If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.** We know from Paul's many statements of his confident hope of a resurrection that he was in no doubt of it; but the joyful emergence from the state of death to which he looked forward, and the eternal life with Christ which was to follow, was attained, he knew, only by constant watching and praying.

12. **Not that I have already obtained.** Paul has been writing about the vast gains that come from Christ, but he would not seem to be boasting. He had not obtained them all, but he was in process of obtaining them. **Or am already made perfect.** The Christian in glory is to be like his Lord (1 John 3:3); but on earth this likeness is growing in him, it is not completed. **But I press on.** Paul is thinking of his favorite comparison of life to a foot-race in the Greek athletic games. **If so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.** Paul's glad anticipations reach forward to grasp the crown of victory which Christ had in store for him when he grasped him in the hour of conversion. The words fairly leap in eagerness.

13. **Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold.** Paul is going on to speak of false teachers and warns his beloved Philippians against them. *They* are sure that they have grasped the crown, but Paul would be more humble. **But one thing I do,** though these false teachers profess to accomplish many things. Paul was really a wonderfully many-sided man, — traveller, author, orator, theologian, church organizer, evangelist, winsome friend, — but he fused it all together into one overmastering purpose, to please Christ. In this consecration lay much of his power. **Forgetting the things which are behind.** Forgetting all his accomplishments, taking no pride in what he had done, leaving them behind him altogether. **And stretching forward to the things which are before.** Eager for new tasks, fresh hardships perhaps, larger undertakings for Christ, as the foot-racer leans forward in the race, with head, body, and arms outstretched.

14. **I press on toward the goal.** Paul was not running aimlessly, but straight toward a goal which was in full view. **Unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.** God the Father had summoned Paul, through Christ, to devote his life to his service. It was a high calling, an upper, lofty calling, as against the lower calling to be a tentmaker or even a rabbi. The prize, the reward, the supreme result of a life lived in obedience to that call was God's approval, the crown of eternal life.

## LESSON XI (24). — September 9.

### JOHN MARK. — Acts 12:12, 25—13:13; 15:36–40; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13.

**PRINT Acts 12:12, 25—13:5; 15:36–40; 2 Timothy 4:11.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* — Eccl. 9:10.

**Devotional Reading:** Ps. 32:1–7.
**Primary Topic:** John Mark, One of Paul's Helpers.
**Lesson Material:** Acts 13:4, 5; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.
**Memory Verse:** Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Eccl. 9:10.

**Junior Topic**: THE MAN WHO FAILED AND TRIED AGAIN.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 12 : 12 ; 13 : 4, 5, 13 ; 15 : 36–40 ; Col. 4 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 11 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 13.
**Memory Verses**: Matt. 21 : 28, 29.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE LIFE OF MARK.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: MARK'S CONTRIBUTION TO CHRISTIANITY.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will find some appropriate teachings in this lesson : never to give up when they have undertaken a task ; never to yield to a failure when they have made it, but to go on from it to a success ; and to imitate Paul in setting a high standard for their friends and holding them up to it.

**The Older Classes**, in addition to the personal lessons from Mark's life, will make a little study of his Gospel, bringing out especially the features that indicate Mark's character and experience, and his association with Peter.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Peter's release from prison, A.D. 44. The first missionary journey begins, A.D. 47. The second missionary journey begins, A.D. 50. Mark's Gospel written, sometime between A.D. 63 and A.D. 70.

**Place.** — Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, Perga, Rome.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Mark's home life and education.
Mary's house a center of the Christian church.
Mark and Barnabas.
Mark and Paul.
Mark and Peter.
Characteristics of Mark's Gospel.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: Warning and Encouragement from the Life of Mark.**

I. MARK'S GREAT OPPORTUNITY AND FAILURE, Acts 12 : 12, 25—13 : 13.
- The church in Mark's house.
- Mark's opportunity with Barnabas and Saul.
- Mark's opportunity with Paul.
- Mark's opportunity in the great adventure.
- Mark's sad failure.

II. MARK'S SECOND ATTEMPT AND SUCCESS, Acts 15 : 36–40 ; Col. 4 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 11 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 13.
- Paul and Barnabas separate.
- What Mark missed.
- How Mark made good.
- The great service of Mark to Christianity.
- Transforming defeat to victory.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*John Mark*, by Rev. James D. Hunter, D.D Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*. Wells's *Bible Miniatures*. Matheson's *Representative Men of the New Testament*. Milligan in *Men of the New Testament*. Commentaries on Mark and Acts and articles on Mark in the standard Bible dictionaries. "St. Mark's Day" in Keble's *Christian Year*.

ACTS 12 : 12. And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark ; where many were gathered together and were praying.

I. **MARK'S GREAT OPPORTUNITY AND FAILURE**, Acts 12 : 12, 25—13 : 13. WHO MARK WAS. John Mark was a Jew, living in Jerusalem. Marcus or Mark was his Roman surname. His mother, named Mary, gave her boy a careful education, and he was reared under the finest religious influences. She was a leading Christian, and Mark must have known Christ and have witnessed some of the events which he afterwards described so vividly in his Gospel. It is thought that he was the "certain young man" about whom he alone tells (Mark 14 : 51), who followed Christ when he was arrested, and, when he himself was seized, left his linen cloth in the hands of Christ's captors and fled naked. Our definite knowledge of Mark begins with a scene in his mother's home in the early days of the church.

Symbol of St Mark.
His emblem is the lion, expressing courage, dignity, and energy.

THE CHURCH IN MARK'S HOUSE. 12. **And when he had considered the thing.** In the persecution set on foot by King Herod Agrippa I., James had been slain, the

25. And Bär′-nă-băs and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark.

Acts 13:1. Now there were at Ăn′-tĭ-ŏch, in the church that was *there*, prophets and teachers, Bär′-nă-băs, and Sȳm′-ĕ-ŏn that was called Nī′-gĕr, and Lū′-cĭŭs of Çȳ-rē′-nē, and Măn′-ă-ĕn the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

---

first martyr of the Christian faith among the apostles, and Peter had been imprisoned in Jerusalem, the intention being to kill him also when the passover was ended. But continual prayer was made by the church for their beloved leader, and God answered this prayer by sending an angel who freed Peter from his chains, led him out of the prison and through a street, and then left him. He stood there amazed at the marvellous event, and needing a little thought to bring him to his senses. **He came to the house of Mary.** She was the sister of Barnabas, and was probably a widow, as her husband is nowhere mentioned. She seems to have been well off, as Barnabas was, and possessed a house so commodious that it made a good meetingplace for a largely attended meeting. Indeed, many think that this was the house of the Upper Room in which the Lord's Supper was instituted, and that Mark was the Man with the Pitcher who indicated the room. Peter turned to this house instinctively, and he might have had there his Jerusalem home. **The mother of John whose surname was Mark.** John was his Jewish name and Mark his Gentile name. **Where many were gathered together and were praying.** The implication is that this was a customary place for church gatherings, and that this especial gathering was for prayer. Mark was surrounded by an atmosphere of prayer and of earnest testimony. He had every opportunity to catch the contagion of Christlike lives, and to be filled with the Spirit.

We have next a very vivid account of Peter's vigorous rapping at the door, of Rhoda's timid looking through the peephole, of the apostle's renewed and still louder summons, and of the rejoicing of the Christians when they saw their restored leader and knew that their prayers had been wonderfully answered. Mark was doubtless taking it all in, and the event must have made a deep impression upon his plastic mind.

Mark's Opportunity with Barnabas and Saul. 25. **And Barnabas.** This uncle (it may be translated "cousin") of Mark's was an especially noble man, generous with his gift of a field to the poor Christians of Jerusalem, generous in his ready acceptance of Saul after his conversion and vouching for him to the church, generous in his quick faith in the Gentile Christians of Antioch. He was a man of power, eloquence, and great winsomeness. Just to be with him and listen to him was a wonderful opportunity for John Mark. **And Saul.** This was the former persecutor of the Christians, now himself become a humble and ardent follower of the Lord Jesus. He was probably the greatest man who ever lived on earth, a man of marvellous mental capacity, with a vast genius for leadership, and with a most lovable nature born of his love for the Saviour. To be with him was a priceless privilege for John Mark, an unparalleled education and inspiration. **Returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration.** They handed over to the heads of the Jerusalem church the famine gifts which the Christians in Antioch had sent them. **Taking with them John whose surname was Mark.** The young man must have had a winsome personality, thus to commend himself to two men so earnest in their work as Barnabas and Saul. Also, Barnabas would naturally like to associate his nephew with himself, and Mary was doubtless glad to have her son active in Christian work.

Mark's Opportunity in the Great Adventure. 1. **Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there.** Antioch, the important Syrian capital, was the home of the first large body of Christians recruited from the Gentiles, the most suitable starting-point for Paul's great mission to the Gentile world. **Prophets and teachers.** The prophets were teachers, but also — frequently, at least — had the power of foretelling the future. **Barnabas.** Named first as the leader, the man who had been sent by the Jerusalem church to superintend the new work in Antioch. **And Symeon that was called Niger.** Symeon was his Jewish name and Niger his Latin or foreign name. It means "black," and he may have had an especially dark complexion. **And Lucius of Cyrene.** Perhaps the Lucius whom Paul in Rom. 16:

2. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Bär′-nă-băs and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Sĕ-leū′-ci-ă; and from thence they sailed to Çȳ′-prŭs.

5. And when they were at Săl′-ă-mĭs, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant.

---

21 called his "kinsman." Cyrene was in northern Africa, but there were many Jews there. Lucius was his Latin name. **And Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrach.** Manaen (Menahem) is a Jewish name, and the man must have been quite influential, having been reared at court with Herod Antipas. **And Saul.** He was from Tarsus, not far away, but the rest were from a wide range of cities, typical of the far-reaching missionary enterprise then to be inaugurated.

2. **And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted.** They were holding special services, purifying and concentrating their minds by fasting. They had great work on hand. **The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul.** Doubtless the Spirit spoke through the prophets already mentioned. **For the work whereunto I have called them.** Saul was called to his missionary work when he was converted. Barnabas had shown the missionary spirit and his close sympathy with Saul.

3. **Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them.** This was in token of dedication to the work, and also as a sign that they were to go forth representing the church and all its members. **They sent them away.** "Missionary" means "one sent."

4. **So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit.** The last verse had said that "*they* sent them away"; but their sending would have availed nothing if the Holy Spirit had not been back of their act. **Went down to Seleucia.** The seaport of Antioch, connected with the city by the Orontes River. **And from thence they sailed to Cyprus.** This island was a natural starting-point for their expedition, since it was the home of Barnabas, and Christianity already had a foothold there.

5. **And when they were at Salamis.** Salamis was at the eastern end of Cyprus, the seaport nearest Seleucia. **They proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.** Paul, apostle to the Gentiles, always began his work with the Jews, as the most likely to respond. There were many Jews in Cyprus, and in Salamis they were numerous enough to need several synagogues. **And they had also John as their attendant.** The work of John Mark was to arrange for their lodging, provide their food, interest people in their work by means of conversation, perhaps baptize the converts. It has been pointed out that the word here translated "attendant" is the word that means a regular assistant in a synagogue, and that this may have been Mark's usual office.

MARK IN CYPRUS, AND WHAT HE LEARNED THERE. Paul and Barnabas, embarked on their missionary tour, must have presented Christ with fulness and great power. How men would flock to hear them to-day! No distance would be too great to travel, no money too much to pay for that splendid privilege. Moreover, Mark witnessed at least one work of miraculous power, the blinding of Elymas the sorcerer, and one notable conversion, that of Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul. Every day of the journey gave new and convincing evidence of the divine origin of Christianity and of the conquering strength of the Holy Spirit, present with the apostles. Few young men in the world's history have had so great an opportunity as Mark had in Cyprus.

MARK IN PERGA AND HOW HE FAILED THERE. The next move of the little missionary band, after completing the tour of Cyprus, was to sail northwestward to Pamphylia, in the center of the southern coast of Asia Minor, and to Perga its capital. There John Mark left Paul and Barnabas and returned to Jerusalem. The young man's wonderful experiences in Cyprus did not avail to keep him faithful, nor did his affection for his uncle Barnabas and his noble friend Paul. Luke does not record the reason for his withdrawal, possibly because his later life made amends and he did not wish to set down anything to his discredit. That Paul was sorely dis-

ACTS 15:36. And after some days Paul said unto Bär′-nă-băs, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they fare.

37. And Bär′-nă-băs was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark.

38. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Păm-phyl′-ĭ-ă, and went not with them to the work.

39. And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Bär′-nă-băs took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Çy′-prŭs:

40. But Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

---

pleased is made clear in a later passage (Acts 15 : 38). Mark may have been afraid to venture into the savage and perilous interior of Asia Minor. He may have become tired of the work. He may have had an attack of the malaria which is a scourge of that seacoast. He may have disapproved of Paul's evident purpose to work mainly among the Gentiles. Whatever may have been the discouragement which turned him back, it was one that Paul's stout heart would have made light of. Mark had begun to build his tower of life without counting the cost. He had laid his hand on the plough and then looked back. He received the disapproval of Jesus Christ as well as of his servant Paul.

II. **MARK'S SECOND ATTEMPT AND SUCCESS**, Acts 15 : 36-40 ; Col. 4 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 11 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 13. PAUL AND BARNABAS SEPARATE. 36. **And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas.** The two missionary partners had returned from their first great journey, had made their report to the mother church at Antioch, and had spent some time there in teaching and preaching. **Let us return now.** Paul could not stay long in one place, because so many places needed the message that he could give. **And visit the brethren in every city.** Paul always was anxious for his converts. He knew well how many temptations assailed them from the surrounding heathenism. **Wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord.** It was God's word and not theirs, and would make its own way ; but none the less the ignorant converts needed instruction, and preaching was needed to bring the word to men's hearts. **And see how they fare.** They may have met persecution. Worldliness may have seized upon them. They may have slipped back into idolatry. Doubts of Christianity may have assailed them. They may have been successful in evangelism and needed aid in the harvest of souls.

37. **And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark.** It was natural that he should wish to take his nephew with him.

38. **But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia.** Paul could forgive almost anything but desertion, not because Mark had deserted from him, but because he had deserted from Christ's cause. Armies shoot deserters ; they can excuse almost any other offence. **And went not with them to the work.** It was the work of which Paul thought, not of his own dignity. He would not jeopardize the work by forming another partnership with a man who might leave it in the lurch.

39. **And there arose a sharp contention.** " Paroxysm " is the exact Greek word ; it was a " spasm " of anger, which threatened their well-tried friendship. **So that they parted asunder one from the other.** Here Barnabas drops out of the history, though Paul refers to him several times in his epistles, and without animosity. **And Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus.** Naturally, as that was the home of Barnabas, where he would find many acquaintances that would aid him in his task.

40. **But Paul chose Silas.** Who proved to be a noble helper, a worthy successor to Barnabas. Later Paul obtained Timothy as a successor to Mark, and a wonderful aid he proved to be. **And went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.** Thus there were two sets of missionaries instead of one, and two missionary journeys instead of one, and the Lord overruled this sad quarrel to the strengthening of his work and the enlargement of his kingdom.

WHAT MARK MISSED. Mark may have done glorious work with Barnabas in

2 TIM. 4: 11. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering.

Cyprus; we are not told of that. But think what he missed with Paul on his second missionary tour! This was the journey that carried the gospel from Asia to Europe. This journey had the thrilling experience in the jail at Philippi, saw the fine beginnings in Thessalonica, witnessed the Bible-searchings of Berœa, heard Paul's sermon on the Areopagus at Athens, planted the vigorous church in Corinth, wrote the first of the Pauline Epistles. Mark could have had nothing in Cyprus comparable to this. It was a vast loss which he suffered in consequence of that cowardice at Perga.

HOW MARK MADE GOOD, 2 Tim. 4: 11. **Only Luke is with me.** Paul was writing from his second Roman imprisonment only a short time before his execution. Luke, the beloved physician who had attended him on many other occasions, the author of the third Gospel and the Acts, was Paul's only companion in these closing days of his life. **Take Mark, and bring him with thee.** Mark had been with Peter, but seems to have left him and to have been at this time in Asia Minor, where Timothy was laboring.

> "Companion of the Saints! 'twas thine
> To taste that drop of peace divine,
> When the great soldier of thy Lord
> Called thee to take his last farewell,
> Teaching the Church with joy to tell
> The story of your love restored." — *John Keble, "St. Mark's Day."*

**For he is useful to me for ministering.** Not for ministry to others, but for taking care of Paul, who was worn with age, with his many labors, and with his imprisonment. The *is* is emphatic, as if Paul would say "He is *now* useful to me, whatever he may once have been." This is not the only indication that Paul had restored Mark to his confidence. In Col. 4: 10 we see that Mark was with Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome, and was commended by Paul to the Christians at Colossæ. Also in Paul's letter to Philemon (v. 24), written at the same time, we find Mark joined with Luke and others as Paul's "fellow-workers." Peter, moreover (1 Pet. 5: 13) joins "Mark my son" with himself in his salutation. This may be a term of endearment, but it is more likely to mean that Mark was Peter's "son in the gospel," that is, his convert. "Early tradition represented Mark as 'the interpreter of Peter,' which may mean that he accompanied Peter, in the later years of the apostle's life, on his missionary journeys, and acted as his spokesman when addressing Gentile audiences, or the phrase may merely describe Mark's work in writing down the preaching of Peter in the Gospel which goes by Mark's name. There can be little doubt that Mark was in Rome with both Paul and Peter. Tradition also made him the founder of the church in Alexandria, but the value of the tradition is uncertain."— *Davis's Bible Dictionary.* Mark is said to have suffered a martyr's death, but the time and place are unknown.

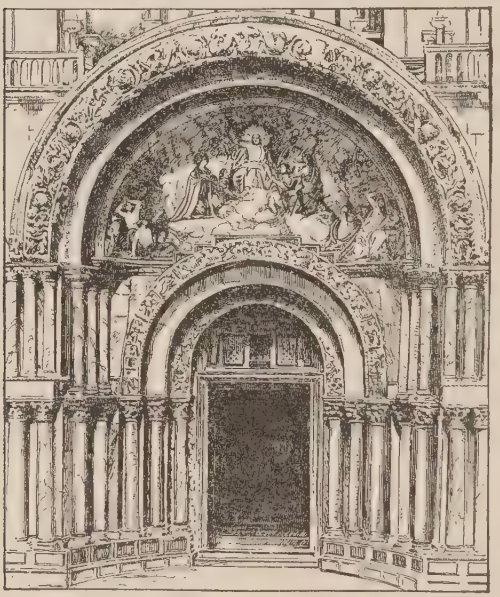
THE GREAT SERVICE OF MARK TO CHRISTIANITY. Mark's great work was of course the writing of the second Gospel. The tradition is very plausible which ascribes this Gospel to Peter as its source, though it may not have been written down until after Peter's death. Rome was probably the place of writing, and it was almost certainly the first of the four Gospels. It is thought that "to the keen memory of the Apostle Peter, recalling scenes in which he had often borne a prominent part, and of which he was an eyewitness, we owe the graphic coloring, the picturesque touches, the minuteness of detail, which his 'interpreter' reverently preserved, and faithfully enshrined in the pages of his Gospel." — *Cambridge Bible.* Mark's Gospel records a number of matters concerning Peter which the other Gospels omit, and also omits several facts concerning him seemingly through modesty.

"It is easy to imagine how often the long hours of their journeys were lightened by the stirring stories which Peter again and again would be asked to repeat to his eager young comrade, until Mark would actually see the scenes which he afterwards pictured in his Gospel. It is not strange that he wrote with all the graphic distinctness and vividness of an eyewitness, and could give such complete details as to time and place and circumstance. If you wish definite information as to any Gospel incident, consult Mark." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.*

Mark's characteristic word is "straightway." His book moves swiftly. It is a book of crowds. It relates the miracles and repeats few of the parables. It shows the side of the Saviour that appealed most to impetuous Peter and to the perhaps

equally ardent Mark. That is why we have four Gospels, because no one book could present adequately the many phases of the matchless Life.

Transforming Defeat into Victory. "We cannot see the purposes of God in leading, or suffering us to be led, in certain ways. We are like Mrs. Faber, one of George Macdonald's characters. 'I wonder why God made us,' says Mrs. Faber bitterly. 'I am sure I don't know where was the use of making me.' 'Perhaps not much yet,' replied Dorothy; 'but, then, he hasn't made you; he hasn't done with you yet. He is making you now, and you don't like it.' No, we don't like it! and because we don't like it we won't have it that our trials are our growing-pains. But if we cannot understand what an artist is going to produce after only a few strokes of the brush or chisel, why should we expect to understand the incomplete work of the great Artificer of our lives? 'A Christian man's life,' says Henry Ward Beecher, 'is laid in the loom of time to a pattern which he does not see, but God does; and his heart is a shuttle. On one side of the loom is Sorrow, and on the other is Joy; and the shuttle, struck alternately by each, flies back and forth, carrying the thread, which is white or black as the pattern needs. And in the end, when God shall lift up the finished garment and all its changing hues shall glance out, it will then appear that the deep and dark colors were as needful to beauty as the bright and high colors.'



St. Mark's Cathedral, Venice. Main Entrance.

Several centuries after the martyrdom of St. Mark, his grave was opened and his relics were conveyed with great pomp by some Venetians to Venice and re-buried there. Over them was erected one of the most beautiful churches that Christendom can to-day boast of.

We will not, then, lose hope in our own future or that of another in the hour of greatest weakness and wretchedness. God is able and willing to make our deepest humiliations minister to our highest exaltations. This is the great lesson of John Mark's life. It is the lesson of the power of man, under God, to gain self-mastery and to overcome the world. It is a lesson on the method of God in the making of saints."— *Rev. James D. Hunter, D.D.*

"As especially in keeping (by undesigned coincidence) with St. Mark's fall and restoration and his slow advance to settled power, we should observe what significance the two miracles and the one parable have which are recorded only by St. Mark. They are the healing of the deaf and dumb man at Decapolis, with the *five* stages in his gradual cure (Mark 7 : 31), the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, with the *four* successive stages (Mark 8 : 22), and the parable of the seed growing secretly and slowly, 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear' (Mark 4 : 16). Among the many lessons learned from Christ through St. Peter *this* laid hold of St. Mark; it fitted his need, gave him good hope and heart that he could indeed 'rise on stepping-stones of his dead self' to a new and higher life; and what he found so true in his own case he could not but put on record, to be a 'profitable ministry' through the Holy Spirit to very many 'feeble hearts,' who like him have become 'great-hearts' and 'lion-hearts' for Christ." — *Rev. A. E. Humphreys.*

*Illustration.* One day in the laboratory of the famous chemist Faraday a silver cup was knocked into a jar of strong acid, in which it was apparently destroyed. But Faraday used chemicals and precipitated every particle of silver to the bottom of the jar. He sent it to a silversmith, and soon the cup came back restored to its former shape.

" Once like a broken bow Mark sprang aside:
Yet grace recalled him to a worthier course,
To feeble hands and knees increasing force,
Till God was magnified.

" And now a strong Evangelist, St. Mark
Hath for his sign a lion in his strength;
And through the stormy water's breadth and length
He helps to steer God's Ark.

" Thus calls he sinners to be penitents,
He kindles penitents to high desire,
He mounts before them to the sphere of saints,
And bids them come up higher." — *Christina G. Rossetti.*

## LESSON XII (25). — September 16.

## LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN. — Luke 1 : 1–4; Acts 1 : 1–5; 16 : 9–18; Colossians 4 : 14; 2 Timothy 4 : 11.

**PRINT Luke 1 : 1–4; Acts 1 : 1; 16 : 9–15; Col. 4 : 14; 2 Timothy 4 : 11.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *A friend loveth at all times; And a brother is born for adversity.* — PROV. 17 : 17.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 91 : 9–16.
**Reference Material** : Acts 20 : 5—21 : 19; chaps. 27 and 28.
**Primary Topic** : LUKE'S STORY OF THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.
**Lesson Material** : Luke 4 : 38–43.
**Memory Verse** : He had compassion on them, and healed their sick. Matt. 14 : 14.
**Junior Topic** : LUKE, PAUL'S FRIEND.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 16 : 9–15; Col. 4 : 14; 2 Tim. 4 : 11.
**Memory Verse** : Prov. 17 : 17.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : HOW LUKE HELPED PAUL.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : LUKE'S CONTRIBUTION TO CHRISTIANITY.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**For the Younger Classes** the Lesson Committee suggests " Luke's Story of the Great Physician," Luke 4 : 38–43. While you tell the children this story of the healing work of Jesus, point out the fact that Luke, who wrote it, was himself a physician, and give them an idea of what he did for Paul.

**The Other Classes** will become familiar with the work of Luke, the doctor-friend of Paul, studying Paul's need of a physician, and how Luke met that need. The oldest classes will get a general idea of Luke's two books, especially learning what are their chief characteristics.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Paul and Luke pass from Troas to Philippi, A.D. 50. Paul's imprisonment in Cæsarea, A.D. 58, 59. Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 61, 62. Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 66, 67.

**Place.** — Troas, Philippi, Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Rome.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Paul's " thorn in the flesh."
Luke's ministry to Paul.
Luke's literary style.
The characteristics of Luke's Gospel.
The characteristics of the Acts.
The character of Luke.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT** : Luke's Work and Writings.

I. LUKE, THE HISTORIAN, Luke 1 : 1–4; Acts 1 : 1–5.
Characteristics of Luke's Gospel.
Characteristics of the Acts.

II. LUKE, THE MISSIONARY, Acts 16 : 9–18.
The man of Macedonia.
The " we " sections of the Acts.

III. LUKE, THE PHYSICIAN, Col. 4 : 14; 2 Tim. 4 : 11.
Paul's need of a physician.
Luke's fidelity.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hayes's *The Most Beautiful Book Ever Written.* Redlich's *St. Paul and His Companions.* Milligan in *Men of the New Testament.* David Smith's *Life and Letters of St. Paul.* Ramsay's *Luke the Physician.* Selwyn's *St. Luke the Prophet.* Hobart's *The Medical Language of St. Luke.* Robertson in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible* Whyte's *Bible Characters,* chaps. 104 and 117. Commentaries on Luke and the Acts.

I. **LUKE, THE HISTORIAN**, Luke 1 : 1-4 ; Acts 1 : 1-5. *The Name, Luke* (Greek, *Loukas*), is a very unusual one, appearing to be a contraction from the Latin Lucanus, as Apollos is a shortened form of Apollonius and Silas of Silvanus.

*An Outline Biography of Luke*, partly fanciful, is thus pieced together by Prof. D. A. Hayes from tradition, reasonable conjecture, and the hints afforded us in the New Testament:

" 1. He was born a slave boy in the household of Theophilus, a wealthy government official in Antioch. He grew up into most engaging appearance and most attractive personality. He was of a peculiarly acute intellect and of a most obliging disposition. He won his master's confidence and then his personal liking. Theophilus decided to educate the boy at his own expense and at the best university in the land. So it was that the second capital event in the life of Luke was his matriculation at Tarsus.

" 2. Here he studied medicine, where the great masters in that profession, Aretæus, Dioscorides, and Athenæus, had been educated. Just a few miles away at Æ[illegible]æ stood the great temple of Æsculapius, which furnished the nearest approach to the modern hospital to be found in the ancient world. From the university lectures Luke got the theory of medicine ; in the temple of Æsculapius he got the practice and experience he needed. He made the acquaintance of Barnabas and Saul here, and laid the foundations for a lifelong friendship with these men.

Symbol of St. Luke.

His emblem is the ox, expressing power and sacrifice, Christ's priestly and mediatorial office.

" 3. His education completed, he returned to Antioch and rendered faithful and most successful service in his master's family. Then the gospel was preached at Antioch, and Luke was among the first to hear it and to accept it. He told his master, Theophilus, about it, and Theophilus himself became interested and at last converted. Then about the first thing Theophilus did as a Christian was to give Luke his freedom.

" 4. The first impulse of the freedman Luke was to get away from all the scenes of his servitude and to test his new-found liberty by wandering far and wide at his own sweet will. He shipped as a physician upon one of the vessels plying up and down the Mediterranean Sea, and there he had manifold experiences. His outlook was broadened as he saw more of the world. He was of service to many people and he made many friends.

" 5. On one of his voyages he met some members of the family of Lucanus the poet, and they persuaded him to accompany them to their home, in Corduba in Spain. Luke was there when the poet was born, and the baby boy was named after him. In this household he became acquainted with Gallio and Seneca and many other notable men. The slave boy had risen to a considerable height, for his native ability and his excellent education and his goodness of heart enabled him to converse with the best of men as their equal, and as a freedman and physician he was admitted to terms of intimacy which otherwise would have been impossible.

" 6. In due time he came back to Antioch and was resident there when many of the stirring events which he narrates in the history of the Christian church took place.

" 7. Later he removed to Troas and settled there, where Paul found him on his second missionary journey. He went with Paul to Philippi, and was left in charge of that church for seven years.

" 8. He left Philippi with Paul in A.D. 58, and remained with Paul thereafter until the apostle's martyrdom.

" 9. Some time after this event he wrote the third Gospel and the book of Acts for Theophilus, and he fully intended to write a third volume continuing the history, but he was swept away into the tide of Christian evangelism and never found the leisure to do it.

" 10. He labored as an evangelist in many lands, and in a ripe old age he fell on sleep and was buried somewhere in Greece.

" 11. Luke was one of the most respected and best-beloved members of the early church. His praise was in all the churches. All women liked him and all men honored him. Apollos and he were the most accomplished writers and Paul and he were the most prolific writers of the New Testament times. Take the writings of Luke and Paul out of the New Testament and it would be less than half its present

Luke 1:1. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us,

2. Even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word,

3. It seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Thĕ-ŏph'-ĭ-lŭs;

4. That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

---

size; and of the larger half of the present contents Luke wrote more than Paul. He was a most versatile man — a physician, a musician, a painter, a poet, a preacher, a prolific author, an intrepid missionary — a man with many gifts and many friends and manifold accomplishments. His books are invaluable. Both he and they are worth our knowing and knowing well."

Luke 1:1. **Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative.** Among these many authors of earlier Gospels we may reckon Mark and Matthew. **Concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us.** Implying that Christ's life, death, and resurrection were the fulfilment of prophecy.

2. **Even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses.** This implies that Luke was not an eyewitness of the events of Christ's life, but only a collector of information from eyewitnesses. The word for "eyewitnesses" is *autoptai*, which appears in "autopsy," and refers to a medical examination of the body to get at the facts. **And ministers of the word.** "Ministers" is another of Luke's medical terms, signifying assistants of the principal physician. These servants of the Word of God were the apostles.

3. **It seemed good to me also.** Many others had written accounts of Christ's life, but Luke felt that there was room and need for one more. Some of the others may have been inaccurate, — others may have omitted much that he could record. He had a fresh viewpoint; moreover, he had at least one eager and waiting reader. **Having traced the course of all things accurately from the first.** Luke begins with the birth of John the Baptist. The expression here used is still another of Luke's medical terms. **To write unto thee in order.** Luke's Gospel follows the chronological order, in the main, but this plan does not prevent occasional groupings of events and sayings if his narrative can thereby gain in clearness and force. **Most excellent Theophilus.** "Theophilus" means "Lover of God," and several have thought that the name stands for no definite person, but for any Christian that might read the book. This, however, is unlike Scripture method, and is extremely improbable. We know nothing about this Theophilus, but "most excellent" is applied to Governor Felix (Acts 23:26; 24:3) and to Governor Festus (Acts 26:25), so that Theophilus may have been a man of rank and perhaps a Roman official.

4. **That thou mightest know the certainty.** Note that from the very start the followers of Jesus Christ were no credulous accepters of myth and hearsay. They sought out facts, they went to eyewitnesses. In those days of bitter persecution too much was at stake to risk it on a mere tradition; the early Christians demanded — and obtained — certainty. **Concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.** "This preface gives a lively picture of the intense, universal interest felt by the early church in the story of the Lord Jesus: apostles constantly telling what they had seen and heard; many of their hearers taking notes of what they said for the benefit of themselves and others: through these gospelets acquaintance with the evangelic history circulating among believers, creating a thrist for more and yet more; imposing on such a man as Luke the task of preparing a Gospel as *full*, *correct*, and *well arranged* as possible through the use of all available means — previous writings or oral testimony of surviving eyewitnesses." — *Prof. A. B. Bruce, D.D.*

Characteristics of Luke's Gospel. "St. Luke must be ranked as the first Christian hymnologist. It is to his inspired care that we owe the preservation of the Ave Maria (1:28-33), the Gloria in Excelsis (2:14), the Benedictus (1:68-79), the Magnificat (1:46-55), and the Nunc Dimittis (2:29-32). In this Gospel thanksgiving is prominent. It also gives special prominence to prayer. It is marked mainly by its presentation of the Good Tidings in their universality and gratuitous-

Acts 1 : 1. The former treatise I made, O Thĕ-ŏph′-ĭ-lŭs, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach.

Acts 16 : 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å, and help us.

10. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

---

ness ; it is preëminently the Gospel of pardon and of pity. St. Luke dwells especially on Christ's ministry to the *world*. He reveals especially the sacredness of infancy. His is specially the Gospel of womanhood. He seems to delight in all the records which told of the mercy of the Saviour towards the poor, the humble, the despised. It is specially the Gospel of the outcast, — of the Samaritan, the publican, the harlot, and the prodigal. Lastly, it is the Gospel of tolerance. It is these characteristics that have earned for this Gospel the praise of being 'the most beautiful book that has ever been written.' Among the miracles peculiar to St. Luke are the miraculous draught of fishes, the raising of the widow's son at Nain, and the healing of the ten lepers. Among the parables peculiar to St. Luke are the two debtors, the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, and the Pharisee and the publican." — *F. W. Farrar.*

Acts 1 : 1. **The former treatise I made, O Theophilus.** The reference is to Luke's Gospel, which is called in the Greek a *logos*, an informal narration rather than a formal piece of historical writing. **Concerning all that Jesus began to do and to teach.** In Luke's Gospel (24 : 19) Jesus is described as "a prophet mighty in deed and in word." His deeds spoke loudly of his divine power, and his words also were events. In his life on earth he only *began* his vast and blessed work, which was continued by his Holy Spirit through his church ; the Acts recount Christ's *later* deeds and words.

Characteristics of the Acts. The titles of the Bible books are not part of the original writings, and Luke certainly would not call his book "The Acts of the Apostles," for he concerned himself in the first part mainly with Peter and in the second part wholly with Paul, merely mentioning John and James, Timothy and Silas. The opening chapter of the Acts takes up and supplements the closing chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The Acts is a history of the beginnings of the church. The entire book is an expansion of Christ's words in Acts 1 : 8, telling how the apostles witnessed for Christ successively "in Jerusalem, and in Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." At each stage of this expansion of the church, however, Luke is content to record mere beginnings, the founding of the church in each important locality, and not its history. Thus when Paul, in the course of his journeys, returns to some city where he has established a church, Luke tells us nothing about the progress of the gospel in that city, but hurries the narrative on to some new starting-point.

As to the style of the Acts, it follows the Gospel in its abundance of technical medical terms, and there are more than fifty words common to the two books that are not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

II. **LUKE, THE MISSIONARY**, Acts 16 : 9–18. We are to study the first of the "we" passages in the Acts, where Luke uses the first person, indicating that at those points he joined Paul's party and was an eyewitness of and participant in the events that he recorded.

9. **And a vision appeared to Paul in the night.** Paul's life was illuminated by a number of visions. **There was a man of Macedonia standing.** Some think that this "man of Macedonia" was Luke himself, who may have been pleading with Paul to carry the good news of Jesus Christ to his country. **Beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.** If it was Luke, he would know how much the people needed help, for a physician comes very close to human lives and gets a clear insight into their wretchedness.

10. **And when he had seen the vision.** Paul was a man of swift decision and prompt action. He needed only a hint of God's will and he sprang to obey. **Straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia.** Note the "we." Luke, as a Macedonian, would be more familiar with the ships likely to sail for home, and he, very likely, made inquiries in the port and learned when they might expect a chance to cross the Ægean

11. Setting sail therefore from Trō′-as, we made a straight course to Săm′-ŏ-thrāce, and the day following to Nĕ-ăp′-ŏ-lĭs;

12. And from thence to Phĭ-lĭp′-pī, which is a city of Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å, the first of the district, a *Roman* colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

13. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14. And a certain woman named Lўd′-ĭ-å, a seller of purple, of the city of Thў-ă-tī′-rå, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

---

Sea. **Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.** "Concluding" implies careful thought and a decision based on reason. Observe that Luke includes himself with the preachers; he did not intend to confine his labors to doctoring.

11. **Setting sail therefore from Troas.** Troas (Ilium) is Troy, the city in northwestern Asia Minor made famous by Homer as the scene of the Iliad. **We made a straight course to Samothrace.** An island in the northern part of the Ægean Sea. **And the day following to Neapolis.** This city ("New City," "Naples") was the seaport of Philippi.

12. **And from thence to Philippi.** About ten miles from Neapolis, a city built by Philip of Macedon and named after him. Near by in the mountains were the famous gold mines from which Philip drew the enormous revenue of a thousand talents ($30,000,000) a year. West of the city was fought, a century before this visit of Paul's, the great battle in which Octavius (who became the Emperor Augustus) defeated Brutus and Cassius. **Which is a city of Macedonia.** The country north of Greece proper. Christianity had now reached Europe, and this memorable step decided that it should be, in spite of its Asiatic origin, a European religion, stimulating and directing the world's most active races, who in turn would carry Christianity back to Asia and to all the other continents. **The first of the district, a Roman colony.** This colony was founded by the Emperor Augustus, its members marching from Rome like an army, and forming, where they settled, a miniature Rome in close touch with the mother city. It was not the capital of Macedonia, but was the first city in importance, or perhaps the first reached from the sea, Neapolis belonging at that time to Thrace. **And we were in this city tarrying certain days.** Doubtless they were looking over the field, which was altogether new to Paul, and very different from any in which he had worked before. Luke's aid would be invaluable.

Coin of Philippi.

From the British Museum.

Obverse: Head of Augustus, with the legend, *Cæsar Aug. P. M. Tr. P. Imp.* (Cæsar Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune Power, Imperator). Reverse: Figure of a god crowning Augustus. Legend: *Col*(onia) *Aug*(usta) *Jul*(ia) *Philip*(pi).

13. **And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side.** Philippi was on the banks of the Gangites. **Where we supposed there was a place of prayer.** There were not enough Jews in Philippi to support a synagogue, but they had a nook on the river bank, where water for their ceremonial ablutions would be abundant, and there they were wont to pray under the open sky. **And we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.** Considering the low regard in which women were held in those days, it is notable that women were prominent in Paul's missionary work, and held in high honor, as was the case in the life of Jesus Christ. Women the world over owe everything to Christianity.

14. **And a certain woman named Lydia.** A common name for women, but having in this case a reference, perhaps, to her native country, Lydia, in the center of the coast of Asia Minor. **A seller of purple.** Purple-dyed goods, highly esteemed by

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

the ancients. **Of the city of Tnyatira**, a Lydian city which possessed a guild of dyers. A colony of Jews lived there. **One that worshipped God, heard us.** Lydia was probably a Jewish proselyte. "She had recognized the insufficiency of paganism, and had found a measure of contentment in Judaism's pure and lofty monotheism; but its ceremonial was distasteful to her, and her heart remained unsatisfied." — *Prof. David Smith, D.D.* **Whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.** "The more heed she gave, the more was the welcome of her heart. Let but the first beam of truth find welcome in the soul, and a whole morning of beams follows, growing into perfect day." — *Rev. H. Elvet Lewis.*

15. **And when she was baptized, and her household.** She carried with her all the members of her household, as Cornelius did. Possibly Euodia and Syntyche and the other women of Phil. 4 : 2, 3 were of this household. **She besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord.** Note how delicately Lydia offers her hospitality, as if acceptance of it would be a reward of her fidelity. **Come into my house, and abide there.** "This has been called the first instance of the hospitality which was afterwards so characteristic of the early church, and enforced by the words of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John alike : 1 Pet. 4 : 9 ; Rom. 12 : 13 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 10, etc.; 3 John 5." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **And she constrained us.** Luke uses the same word (Luke 24 : 29) in describing the urgency of the two of Emmaus in their invitation to the risen Lord, and the word is used nowhere else in the New Testament.

III. **LUKE, THE PHYSICIAN**, Col. 4 : 14; 2 Tim. 4 : 11. *Paul's Need of a Physician.* There is little doubt that Paul was afflicted with some physical infirmity that rendered necessary or at least helpful the attendance of some physician. Farrar thinks that it was ophthalmia, and several passages picture Paul's concentrated gaze as if he were trying to see; compare his failure to make out the high priest when tried by the Sanhedrin, and the "large letters" which he made when he wrote with his own hand. Paul also says (Gal. 4 : 13–15) that his visit to the Galatians was occasioned by some malady, and that, if possible, they would have "plucked out their eyes and given them to him," so that the malady seems to have affected his vision. Some have associated this trouble with the blindness resulting from the great light on the Damascus road. Lightfoot thought that the disease was epilepsy, but this is unlikely. With much reason Ramsay argued that Paul was a victim of malaria, which seized him in the lowland of Pamphylia, and compelled him to go for relief to the highland of Galatia. Malaria, once in the system, is very hard to drive out, but recurs at intervals for many years. Paul compared his ailment to a "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12 : 7), which may very well describe the sharp, racking pains of malaria. A very ancient tradition says that Paul's trouble was headache, and malaria causes almost unbearable headaches. Whatever may have been the sickness that affected the apostle, it is

Paul Visited in Prison.

COL. 4: 14. Luke, the beloved physician, and Dē'-măs salute you.
2 TIM. 4: 11. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering.

clear that Luke's presence with him and his skilled and sympathetic aid would be most welcome. Dr. Luke was one of the most useful of Paul's companions.

COL. 4 : 14. **Luke, the beloved physician.** "The adjective suggests a *lovable* man, tender and true; a character profoundly welcome to the life-worn heart of the apostle." — *Bishop Moule.* Paul is writing from his first Roman imprisonment to which Luke followed him, going with him, probably, from the two-year imprisonment in Cæsarea. **And Demas salute you.** Demas, be it observed, gets no affectionate adjective. Perhaps he was already showing the love of this world in preference to spiritual joys and Christian service which led him to forsake Paul in his last imprisonment (2 Tim. 4 : 10), while Luke stood by him.

2 TIM. 4 : 11. **Only Luke is with me.** Paul is now writing from his second Roman imprisonment, urging his beloved young friend Timothy to hasten to Rome. We may be sure that Timothy would have been glad to share with Luke Paul's second imprisonment, as he had shared the first imprisonment, but Paul had placed him in charge of the important church at Ephesus, and there he must remain till the apostle should summon him. **Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering.** It is interesting to think of the group that may have come together in Paul's prison to receive his last messages — the writers of the second and third Gospels, the ardent Timothy, and Paul, the master spirit of the apostles.

LUKE'S FIDELITY. "From the time that Luke adventured himself with Paul, through weal and woe he remained faithful. He had watched the breaking up of the little band; he had seen his leader grow prematurely old through his exacting labors; and he had guessed the issue of the impending trial before Nero. Yet until the end came he would never be absent for long from the side of the man whom he loved as his own soul." — *Hastings.*

"But only Luke is with him now: —
Alas! that even the martyr's cell,
Heaven's very gate, should scope allow
For the false world's seducing spell." — *John Keble.*

"Luke has not given us what cost him nothing. He did not sit down to his desk till he had made innumerable journeys in search of all the materials possible. He spared neither time nor trouble nor expense in the collection of his golden contributions to our New Testament." — *Alexander Whyte.*

"Luke is the most evangelic of all the evangelists. It is he, as Dante remarked long ago (*De Monarchia*, I. 16), who describes most fully 'the meekness and gentleness of Christ.'" — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.*

"O God All-wise, who electing St. Luke to be one of the number of thy four Evangelists didst furnish him with abundance of gifts needful or expedient to so great an end, endowments natural and supernatural, human learning and superhuman wisdom, aptitude and good-will, knowledge and illumination, intercourse with saints and inspiration of the Holy Ghost: grant to us, we beseech thee, hearing ears and seeing eyes that we may profit by his writings; and following in his footsteps may pass by way of life and death into the kingdom of life everlasting." — *Christina G. Rossetti.*

"Here standeth Luke, physician once and still;
Healer of souls whom God delights to save;
Wise-eyed in helpfulness; in pity brave;
For all diseases using blessed skill." — *E. C. Lefroy.*

## LESSON XIII (26). — September 23.

## TIMOTHY, A GOOD MINISTER OF CHRIST JESUS. — Acts 16: 1–3; Philippians 2 : 19–22; 2 Timothy 1 : 1–6; 3 : 14, 15.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Be thou an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.*** — 1 TIM. 4 : 12.

**Devotional Reading**: PS. 119 : 9–16.
**Primary Topic**: A BOY WHO LOVED THE BIBLE.

**Lesson Material** : 2 Tim. 1 : 1–6 ; 3 : 14, 15 ; Acts 16 : 1–3.
**Memory Verse** : From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings. 2 Tim. 3 : 15.
**Junior Topic** : Timothy, Paul's Helper.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 16 : 1–3 ; Phil. 2 : 19–22 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 3–6 ; 3 : 14, 15.
**Memory Verse** : 2 Tim. 2 : 3.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Timothy Trained to Serve.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Christian Ministry as a Life Work.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will find much to emulate in the boy Timothy. Compare him with other boys of the Bible, such as Samuel and David. Picture the experiences of Paul at Lystra which were Timothy's introduction to the apostle. Picture some of the later experiences through which Timothy and Paul passed together. Urge upon the boys and girls the truth that they, no less than Timothy, can be helpful to the Church and to its leaders.

**The Older Classes** will study the life of this young minister, taking thought regarding the calling of a minister, and asking themselves whether God may not design them for that calling. Discuss this important question very earnestly and pointedly. The pastor may be specially asked to be present and join the discussion.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The calling of Timothy, A.D. 50. End of second missionary tour, A.D. 52. Beginning of third missionary tour, A.D. 53. Paul and Timothy at Ephesus, A.D. 53–56. Paul's last journey to Jerusalem, A.D. 57. Paul's first Roman imprisonment, A.D. 61, 62. Paul's second Roman imprisonment, A.D. 66.

**Place.** — Lystra, Troas, Macedonia, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Timothy's religious training.
What Timothy gained from Paul.
What Timothy did for Paul.
What Timothy did for the church.
The character of Timothy.
Paul's letters to Timothy.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Timothy, Trained to Serve.**

I. The Training of Timothy, 2 Tim. 1 : 1–6 ; 3 : 14, 15.

Wise mother and grandmother.
A godly home.
A student of God's Word.

II. The Call of Timothy, Acts 16 : 1–3.

When Timothy first met Paul.
What attracted Paul to Timothy.

III. The Work of Timothy, Phil. 2 : 19–22.

He did not "seek his own."
Paul's "son in the gospel."
The Christian ministry as a life work.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Deane's *Friends and Fellow Laborers of St. Paul.* Hasell's *Bible Partings.* Howson's *Companions of St. Paul.* Matheson's *Representative Men.* Milligan in *Men of the New Testament.* Macduff's *St. Paul in Rome.* Redlich's *St. Paul and His Companions.*

Distant View of Lystra. From a photograph.

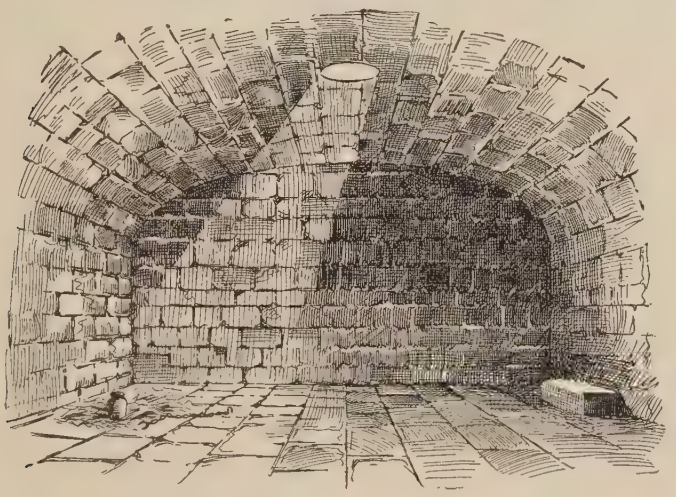
2 TIM. 1:1. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus,

2. To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience,

I. **THE TRAINING OF TIMOTHY**, 2 Tim. 1:1–6; 3:14, 15. This, Paul's last letter, so far as we know, was written to Timothy from the apostle's second Roman imprisonment, and urged Timothy to come to him from Ephesus, where the young man was in charge of that important post. Whether Timothy reached Rome before Paul's execution we do not know.

2 TIM. 1:1. **Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God.** Paul felt that the work he did as an apostle was done through no strength of his own, and that



Mamertine Prison, Rome. Place of Paul's Second Imprisonment.

The dungeon is some fifteen feet in diameter, with its roof slightly vaulted. The hole in the roof was the only means of ingress to and egress from this living tomb.

he was called to be an apostle through no merit of his own, but all was through God's grace and in accordance with his plan. **According to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus.** This "life in Christ" is one of the keynotes of Paul's thinking: "To me to live is Christ," "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation," "Lay hold on the life which is life indeed."

2. **To Timothy.** His name means "venerating or worshipping God." He was born probably in Lystra, Asia Minor, a city visited by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey and where the crowd were on the point of worshipping them as Jupiter and Mercury. Doubtless Timothy's mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were brought to Christ at that time, and the boy Timothy may have been among those who gathered around the still body of Paul after he was stoned, thinking that he was dead. Timothy's mother was a Jewess, but his father was a Gentile. **My beloved child.** So in 1 Tim. 1:2: "my true child in the faith," that is, Paul's spiritual son, brought by him into the true life, the life in Christ Jesus. Timothy was beloved by Paul not only because he was Paul's convert, but because of his lovable personality, and because of his noble work, helping Paul and guiding the churches. **Grace, mercy, peace.** Grace is God's undeserved love, mercy is God's forgiving love, peace is God's abiding love. **From God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.** Much of Paul's theology is in this familiar phrase.

3. **I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience.** Paul came from a family of pious Jews, a long line of God-serving folk; and while he served

how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day

4. Longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5. Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lō′-ĭs, and thy mother Eū-nī′-çĕ; and, I am persuaded, in thee also.

6. For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands.

2 Tim. 3 : 14. But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15. And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

---

God after their fashion, he was conscientious in it. **How unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day.** This unceasing prayer for Timothy is not what Paul is thankful for, but the news that has come of Timothy's faith (v. 5), or perhaps the entire relation between Timothy and himself expressed in the whole of vs. 3–5.

4. **Longing to see thee.** Remember that Paul was in a lonely prison, with only Luke coming in to see him. **Remembering thy tears.** In First Timothy (3 : 14) Paul declared his purpose of visiting his dear young friend. We must suppose that the visit was made, and that these tears were shed by Timothy when Paul parted from him on that occasion. **That I may be filled with joy.** Longing to see thee, . . . that I may be filled with joy.

5. **Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee.** We are not told what this reminder was; perhaps some messenger had brought news of Timothy's fine work in Ephesus. The young man's faith contrasted strongly with the *un*faith of Phygellus, Hermogenes (2 Tim. 1 : 15), and Demas (2 Tim. 4 : 9). **Which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois.** Faith is personified, as if it were a living tenant in the house of the soul. **And thy mother Eunice.** Luke, who may have known the family and who at any rate knew Timothy, calls her (Acts 16 : 1) "a Jewess that believed." If faith dwells in grandmothers it is likely to dwell in mothers, and if it dwells in mothers it is likely to dwell in their sons. **And, I am persuaded, in thee also.** "Professor Reynolds quotes here 'the celebrated mothers of Augustine, of Chrysostom, of Basil, whose life sincerity and constancy became vicariously a glorious heritage of the universal church.' We may add the mother of the Wesleys." — *Rev. A. E. Humphreys.*

6. **For which cause I put thee in remembrance.** The reason for Paul's exhortation following was this fine ancestry of Timothy's, — his grandmother, his mother, and Paul himself, his spiritual father. Let the young man continue to be worthy of them! **That thou stir up the gift of God.** The gift of God was the presence of the Holy Spirit, Timothy's "joy and peace in believing" and power of testimony and of guidance. This is compared to a bed of coals that needs stirring up, or the fire will go out. Timothy was evidently subject to fits of despondency. Perhaps he felt that his great task was a burden too heavy for his young shoulders. Perhaps he was grieving and dismayed because of Paul's second imprisonment and feared his death. Not even this wonderful gift of God will keep itself alive, but it needs our constant attention that it may be and do what God designs for it. **Which is in thee through the laying on of my hands.** Referring to Timothy's ordination to the ministry at the hands of the presbytery mentioned in 1 Tim. 4 : 14, Paul alone being named here, since he is speaking of his personal relation to Timothy. Moreover, he was of course the chief of the presbyters in Timothy's ordination.

2 Tim. 3 : 14. **But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of.** Paul has been prophesying that evil men, in those wicked days of Nero, would grow worse and worse; but Timothy was to rise above the degeneracy of the times, holding fast to his Christian faith and practice. **Knowing of whom thou hast learned them.** That is, from his dear mother and grandmother.

15. **And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings.** That is, the Old

ACTS 16: 1. And he came also to Dĕr′-bē and to Lȳs′-trȧ: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek.

Testament, which was all of our Bible in existence, of course, when Timothy was a boy. The Jewish child began the study of the Old Testament at the age of five. **Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.** Bible wisdom is not mere worldly wisdom, it is saving wisdom, wisdom that reaches beyond time and lays hold of eternity. **Through faith which is in Christ Jesus.** New Testament light falls backward upon the Old Testament. Christian faith discovers saving truth in the prophecies of the Old Testament. The Messiah binds all parts of the Bible together.

II. **THE CALL OF TIMOTHY**, Acts 16 : 1–3. Paul was starting out on his second missionary journey, taking Silas with him in place of Barnabas, from whom he had separated because Barnabas insisted upon adding his nephew Mark to the party. Paul had no one, as yet, to take the place of Mark.

1. **And he came also to Derbe.** Paul was revisiting the places he had visited in his first missionary journey, but he was travelling westward from Antioch instead of

The Injeh Minarets of Iconium.

eastward toward Antioch as before ; therefore he came first to Derbe, which was the last place touched on his former journey. **And to Lystra.** This city, near Derbe and northwest of it, was the place where the multitude, amazed by the miraculous healing of a cripple, had hailed Barnabas as Jupiter and Paul as Mercury, and had started to worship them as gods when the horrified apostles protested vigorously and prevented it. After this a number of hostile Jews from cities previously visited by Paul and Barnabas came upon the scene and so poisoned the minds of the people of Lystra against Paul that they stoned him, and he was thought to be dead but made a wonderful recovery and went on to Derbe. On their return they courageously visited Lystra again, to encourage and instruct their converts. **And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy.** We do not know when Timothy became a disciple : possibly on one of Paul's two previous visits, being led to Christ by Paul or Barnabas ; more likely at some time between those visits and the third, being brought to the Saviour by his mother and grandmother. **The son of a Jewess that believed.** That is, believed in Christianity. The slight mention of Timothy's father makes it likely that he was not living at this time. **But his father was a Greek.** That is, not a Jew, a Gentile. " Greek " was applied to all that were not Jews. If he was living, it is very likely, considering the character of Eunice, that she had persuaded her husband to become a Jewish proselyte.

2. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lÿs′-trȧ and I-ē̆ō′-nĭ-ŭm.

3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

2. **The same was well reported of by the brethren.** Thus Cornelius is described (Acts 10 : 22), and thus Paul described Ananias of Damascus (Acts 22 : 12). "The brethren" were the members of the Christian churches founded by Paul, which had evidently become well established during the five or six years of his absence. Note the care with which Paul selected his helpers, and his wisdom in confirming his own impressions with the judgment of others. **That were at Lystra and Iconium.** Iconium was a city north of Lystra, where Paul had founded a church on his first missionary tour, and the two churches evidently had some intercourse. Young Timothy must have had force of character to be personally known in another city.

3. **Him would Paul have to go forth with him.** He had no one yet to care for the details of the journey, such as food and lodging, as Mark had done. **And he took and circumcised him.** This act was not inconsistent with the decision of the Council at Jerusalem, which Paul, as is said in the very next verse, proceeded to publish to the churches. That decision removed from Gentiles the necessity of circumcision when they became Christians, but Timothy was counted a Jew, since the child of a Jewish mother was regarded by the rabbis as being a Jew. Timothy had remained uncircumcised because his father was a Greek, and doubtless the Jews were less strict so far from Palestine. **Because of the Jews that were in those parts.** They all revered the rite of circumcision, regarding it as the token of admission to the divine covenant between Jehovah and their race which made them the chosen people. **For they all knew that his father was a Greek.** Whenever Timothy might approach a Jew and urge him to become a Christian, the Jew would repulse him, if he remained uncircumcised, and would say, "You chose to be a Greek rather than a Jew. You were faithless to your race and your religion: how can I trust you in any religious matter?" Thus it was wise in Paul to insist on Timothy's circumcision.

So Timothy went with Paul and Silas through Asia Minor to Troas. There they were joined by Luke, and from there they made the momentous passage to Macedonia. Neither Timothy nor Luke seems to have been imprisoned in Philippi, though they probably shared in the perils of Thessalonica, where the missionaries' lodging was stormed by a mob. Thence to Berœa, where Paul left Timothy and Silas to continue the work while he went on to Athens. But Paul needed his helpers, and from Athens sent an urgent bidding to Silas and Timothy. No sooner did they arrive, however, than the unselfish Paul, moved by the need of the imperilled Christians in Thessalonica, sent Timothy back to encourage them. The young missionary was successful in his first independent task, and was soon able to bring back cheering news (1 Thess. 3 : 1–6). On this return Timothy found Paul at Corinth, joined heartily in his evangelistic work in that Godless city, and was highly successful in it. Then Timothy drops out of the history until, about five years later, we find him at Ephesus.

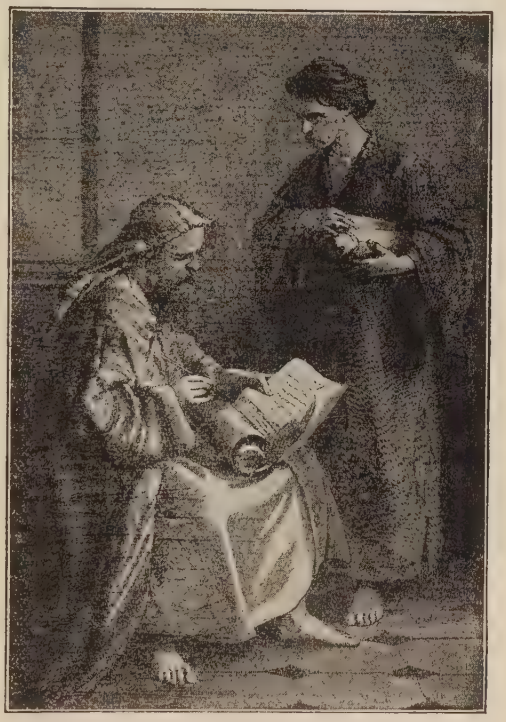
Paul worked in Ephesus for three years, and Timothy with him at least part of the time. From Ephesus he was sent to visit the churches in Macedonia and to go on to Corinth. In his first letter to the Corinthian Christians Paul commended Timothy to them as "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ" (1 Cor. 4 : 17). Timothy was evidently timid, and Paul thoughtfully urged the Corinthian Christians to treat him considerately (1 Cor. 16 : 10, 11). Some think that they did not do so, and that this failure of theirs is alluded to in 2 Cor. 7 : 12.

Returning to Ephesus from Corinth, Timothy joined Paul (following the riot) in his journey through Macedonia, and his name is coupled with Paul's in the address of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written from Macedonia. He went on to Corinth with Paul, and sent greetings to the Roman Christians in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which was written at Corinth (Rom. 16 : 21). When Paul got ready to leave Corinth for Jerusalem, Timothy and others went straight to Troas, and there awaited Paul and Luke, who made the longer circuit through Macedonia. Whether Timothy went on to Jerusalem on that fateful journey we are not told,

PHIL. 2: 19. But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.
20. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state.
21. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.

and we hear nothing of Timothy during the two years of Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea.

III. **THE WORK OF TIMOTHY,** Phil. 2: 19–22. The church at Philippi, the first established by Paul in Europe, was very dear to the apostle, and was most eager in ministering to his needs. His letter to them, written during the first Roman imprisonment, is full of expressions of affection. Timothy was with Paul when he founded the church. Later, when Paul was in Ephesus, he had sent Timothy to Macedonia to visit the churches, that in Philippi among them. Timothy joined Paul in the opening salutation of this letter, being then with Paul in Rome. We study now a further reference to Timothy in this Epistle.



Paul Writing His Epistle to the Romans.

19. **But I hope in the Lord Jesus.** This clause is like Phil. 1: 8: "I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus." The Christian is so united with Christ that his emotions are Christ's, his longings, his hopes, his fears, his affections, all "in the Lord Jesus." **To send Timothy shortly unto you.** Timothy was with Paul in Rome (Phil. 1: 1). Paul had been speaking (v. 12) about his absence from the Philippians; Timothy would take his place. **That I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.** Paul rejoices in the glad assurance that the "state" of the Philippian church will be such as to give him comfort when Timothy reports it; they are Christians that can be depended upon — not, for instance, like the Corinthian church, which he had to warn and rebuke so often.

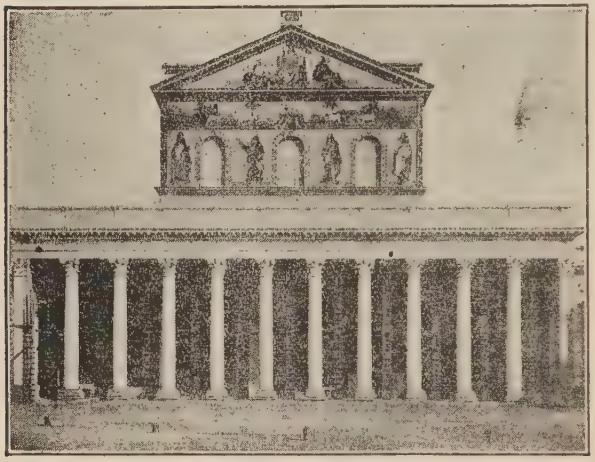
20. **For I have no man likeminded.** Timothy was the only man Paul could send whose mind was like the apostle's in loving care for the Philippians. That was why Paul sent him, though he must have shrunk from losing Timothy's kindly ministries to him in his prison. **Who will care truly for your state.** The verb means to "take anxious thought" for the Philippians, which is only an apparent contradiction to Phil. 4: 6: "In nothing be anxious." That forbidden anxiety is worry about one's self, a failure to rest trustingly in God.

21. **For they all seek their own.** We need not believe that all the Christians around Paul in Rome were faithless, wrapped up in their selfish interest. Paul only means that of all the possible messengers to the Philippians, Timothy was the only one willing to drop his own affairs and speed on Paul's errand. **Not the things of Jesus Christ.** Of course, the interests of Christ *are* the interests of all Christians, their vital and most important interests, if they will only see clearly and view matters in the right proportion.

22. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child *serveth* a father, *so* he served with me in furtherance of the gospel.

22. **But ye know the proof of him.** Timothy had been in Philippi, with Paul and by himself ; the Philippian church had tested him thoroughly. **That, as a child serveth a father.** The Greek word for " child " used here is a very tender one. See 2 Tim. 1 : 2 and the entire Epistle for evidence of Paul's fatherly affection for Timothy. **So he served with me in furtherance of the gospel.** By " the gospel " Paul often means his own evangelistic work, bringing the gospel to men ; compare Phil. 4 : 15. In all that work Timothy had been a faithful partner.

It is thought that Timothy made his journey to Philippi and back to Rome again before Paul was freed from his first imprisonment. At some time during Paul's first imprisonment, probably, came Timothy's own imprisonment, the release from which is recorded in Heb. 13 : 23. This experience, including his trial, may be Timothy's " good confession in the sight of many witnesses " of which Paul speaks in 1 Tim. 6 : 12.



St. Paul's without the Walls, Rome. (Façade restored)
Containing the traditional tombs of Paul and Timothy.

" With the Second Epistle to him ends all that we really know of Timothy. Tradition and ingenious guesswork add a little more, which can be neither proved nor disproved. More than two hundred years after his death, Eusebius tells us that he is related to have held the office of overseer of the diocese of Ephesus ; and five centuries later Nicephorus tells us that he was beaten to death by the Ephesian mob for protesting against the licentiousness of their worship of Artemis. It has been conjectured that Timothy may be the ' angel ' of the Church at Ephesus, who is partly praised and partly blamed in the Apocalypse, and parallels have been drawn between the words of blame in Rev. 2 : 4, 5, and the uneasiness which seems to underlie one or two passages in the Second Epistle to Timothy. But the resemblances are too slight to be relied upon." — *Hastings.*

" In the church of San Paolo (St. Paul) at Rome a gorgeous baldacchino surmounts the traditional tomb of Paul the Apostle. In immediate juxtaposition with it, in front of the high altar, is a shrine of the most modest pretensions, on which is inscribed the one name, which tells its own touching story —

TIMOTHEI.

Here the ashes of the Apostle Timothy are said to rest. Strong is the temptation, for once, not too exactingly to demand or scrutinize authority for the truth of a legend in itself so beautiful, that these two honored servants of Christ, who had loved and labored, wept and prayed, sorrowed and rejoiced together, are now resting side by side, a true ' family burying-place,' the father and his ' own son in the faith.' " — *J. R. Macduff.*

" St. Luke may have been the apostle's physician during his lifetime, and his biographer after his death ; Barnabas and Silas and Apollos, among his companions, may have been more prominent in the eyes of the church at large ; but to the gentle, loving Timothy it was given in a special degree to be the apostle's friend — the disciple whom Paul loved — and one who was so thoroughly imbued with his master's spirit

(Phil. 2 : 20) that he proved a worthy successor to him in the great work to which both were called." — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.*

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AS A LIFE WORK. The Christian ministry is the noblest of all callings. One can serve Christ in any honorable calling, but with a more or less absorbing mixture of worldly interests ; but the minister's time and thoughts and energies are all for Christ.

The Christian ministry is the most satisfactory of callings. It wins eternal rewards. No joy is equal to that of winning souls for Christ. The minister has Christ for his partner, and knows that he cannot fail.

The Christian ministry is the most useful of callings. It touches men on the side of their deepest needs. It rescues the tempted, comforts the sorrowing, directs the perplexed, saves the sinner. It moulds community life and reaches out into all national and international affairs.

The Christian ministry is the most honored calling. Every one looks up to the man of God. He is placed before the young as a model. He is the real head of the community.

The Christian ministry is a pleasant calling. It affords a small salary, but usually a sufficient one. It requires much reading and meditation. The minister is not held down to office hours, but orders his life as he thinks best. All society is open to him, and no career is so interesting as his.

Above all, the Christian minister has the consciousness that he is putting his powers to the best use for Jesus Christ. He lives close to his Master, and does day by day his Master's work.

There is great need of Timothys, greater need than ever before. God grant that there may be one — and more than one — in your class.

Paul's two letters to Timothy furnish a guide to any minister in his work. "That minister who constantly and increasingly takes heed to himself in his walk and conversation ; in preaching better and better every returning Sabbath ; in discharging all the endless duties of his pastorate in season and out of season ; in holding his peace in controversy ; and in a life of secret faith and secret prayer ; God himself will see to it that such an apostolic minister will be imitated and celebrated both as a pattern minister and a pattern man, both before all his people, and before all his fellow ministers. All that, by the grace of God, may be attained by any minister who sets himself to attain it." — *Alexander Whyte.*

## LESSON XIV (27). — September 30.

## REVIEW: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* — HEB. 12 : 1.

**Devotional Reading** : Heb. 11 : 13–16, 39, 40.
**Primary Topic** : FAVORITE STORIES OF THE QUARTER.
**Memory Verse** : Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you. John 15 : 14.
**Junior Topic** : FAVORITE HEROES AND HEROINES OF THE QUARTER.
**Memory Verses** : Heb. 12 : 1, 2.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : SOME GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.
**Topics for Young People and Adults** : LIFE-LESSONS FROM THIS QUARTER.

Out of the following forms of review the teacher will select one or make a combination of several, as he thinks best for his class.

### I. AN ADJECTIVE REVIEW.

Following the method of Dr. George Matheson in his *Representative Men of the Bible*, the following list of adjective characterizations of the persons studied this quarter may be made :

1. Brave John the Baptist.
2. The Faith-Filled Virgin Mary.
3. Impulsive Peter.
4. Loving John the Apostle.
5. Thoughtful Matthew.
6. Ardent Mary Magdalene.
7. Busy Martha and Open-Hearted Mary.
8. Faithful Stephen.
9. Generous Barnabas.
10. The Many-Sided Paul.
11. Timid Mark.
12. Helpful Luke.
13. Consecrated Timothy.

Divide these among the members of the class, asking each to write a two-minute essay on the character assigned, bringing out the characteristic indicated. These essays will be read in the class, by the authors, with brief comments by the teacher.

## II. A CLIMAX REVIEW.

To carry out this review assign the lessons of the quarter to the pupils and ask each to select what he regards as the climax scene in the life of the character assigned him, and tell about it in the class. After each has spoken, discuss the matter briefly, considering whether the pupil has chosen the scene of the greatest importance or not. The following list is only suggestive :

1. John the Baptist. His baptism of Christ.
2. The Virgin Mary. The Annunciation.
3. Peter. His confession of Christ.
4. John the Apostle. His vision in Patmos.
5. Matthew. His acceptance of his call.
6. Mary Magdalene. Seeing Christ on Easter morning.
7. Mary of Bethany. Anointing Christ's feet.
8. Stephen. His prayer for his murderers.
9. Barnabas. Introducing Paul to the Jerusalem church.
10. Paul. His address before Agrippa.
11. Mark. Writing his Gospel.
12. Luke. Caring for Paul in prison.
13. Timothy. Leading the church in Ephesus.

Dürer.

Peter and John.

## III. A CHARACTER-VERSE REVIEW.

Ask the pupils, in preparation for this review, to go over the lessons of the quarter and select for each character the verse in the lesson text (or elsewhere, if they prefer) that in their judgment best represents that character. Thus, for John the Baptist, Matt. 3 : 8 might be chosen : " Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance." For the Virgin Mary Luke 1 : 48 might be selected ; and for Peter, Luke 22 : 31, 32. In the recitation hour compare the various lists, taking one character at a time, and voting on which is the best verse for each character. Thus you will get a fair review of the quarter's work.

## IV. AN UP-TO-DATE REVIEW.

This form of review, which would be suitable for an adult class, considers for each character of the quarter what he or she would do if transported to the present day, how he or she would act, and what he or she would think about the affairs of the modern world. Divide the characters among the members of the class, each to discuss in this way the character assigned. Limit each to three minutes.

## V. A "WHO'S WHO" REVIEW.

This review may be conducted as a question tournament. Divide the class, a week in advance, into two sides, each with a leader. The sides meet privately during the week and form lists of questions beginning with "who," and all bearing on the quarter's lessons. The questions will be of the following types: "Who said, 'Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee'?" "Who gave up a missionary journey and went back home?" "Who was the first Christian martyr?" "Who poured costly ointment over Christ's feet?" The teacher will examine each set of questions to see that all are clearly expressed and fair. In the class the leaders will take turns asking a question of the other side. The members of that side will consult in whispers and the leader will give the answer decided upon. The side that answers most questions correctly is victorious, and the defeated side may be required to give it a social.

## VI. A LETTER-PORTRAIT REVIEW.

Divide the characters of the quarter among the pupils and ask each to write a letter describing the character assigned him. The letter is to be from some one connected with the character's life story. The following is a suggested list:

1. Description of John the Baptist from one of the soldiers of Herod Antipas to another soldier in Antioch.
2. Description of the Virgin Mary in a letter from Elisabeth to a friend in Jerusalem.
3. Description of Peter in a letter from Mark to his uncle Barnabas.
4. Description of the Apostle John in a letter from a member of his church in Ephesus to a Christian in Philippi.
5. Description of Matthew in a letter from the Capernaum centurion to Cornelius.
6. Description of Mary Magdalene in a letter from Mary of Bethany to a friend in Bethlehem.
7. Description of Martha and Mary in a letter from Simon of Bethany to Matthew.
8. Description of Stephen in a letter from Gamaliel to a rabbi in Capernaum.
9. Description of Barnabas in a letter from Apollos to a Christian of Ephesus.
10. Description of Paul in a letter from Timothy to a friend in Rome.
11. Description of Mark in a letter from his uncle Barnabas to Apollos.
12. Description of Luke in a letter from Lydia to Priscilla.
13. Description of Timothy in a letter from Silas to a Christian in Antioch.

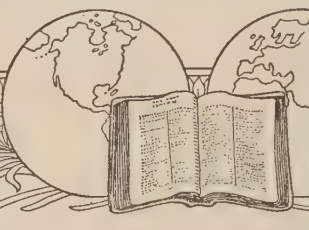
You will probably need to fix for each letter a strict time limit of two minutes.

## VII. A HIDDEN-PICTURE REVIEW.

This review, which is specially adapted to Primary classes, makes use of the beautiful series of lesson pictures published by the publisher of this book. Place a screen in front of the class, and pin one of the quarter's pictures on the back of the screen. Invite a member of the class to come back of the screen, look at the picture, and tell the class what he sees, without mentioning names. The class is to guess what lesson the picture represents. When that is done, another picture is placed on the screen, and another pupil is asked to describe it. So proceed till all the pictures have been used.

Bronze Medal of Peter and Paul.
In the Vatican Library at Rome.

# The Missionary Message of the Bible



## FOURTH QUARTER.

OCTOBER 7—DECEMBER 30, 1923.

(A THREE-MONTHS COURSE.)

### LESSON I. — October 7.

### ABRAHAM, A BLESSING TO THE WHOLE WORLD. — Genesis 12 : 1–4; 18 : 17, 18; 22 : 1–18; Hebrews 11 : 8–10, 17–19.

**PRINT Gen. 12 : 1–4; 18 : 17, 18; 22 : 15–18.**

GOLDEN TEXT. — *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* — GEN. 12 : 3.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 47.
**Reference Material** : Rom. 4; Gal. 3 : 15–19; Jas. 2 : 23.
**Primary Topic** : BEING A BLESSING TO OTHERS.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 12 : 1–4.
**Memory Verse** : I will bless thee . . . and be thou a blessing. Gen. 12 : 2.
**Junior Topic** : A MAN WHO BECAME A BLESSING TO THE WORLD.
**Lesson Material** : Gen. 12 : 1–4; 18 : 17, 18; 22 : 15–18.
**Memory Verses** : Gen. 12 : 2, 3.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : ABRAHAM, A RELIGIOUS PIONEER.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : ABRAHAM, A RELIGIOUS PIONEER.

#### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS

**The Younger Classes** will make this a personal study of Abraham, especially bringing out the lesson that he was blessed by God in order that he might be a blessing to others. Give the children some idea of the rich blessings that God bestowed upon Abraham, and lead them to enumerate their own many blessings received from their Father in heaven. In what ways can they, in return, be blessings to others?

**The Older Classes** will, in the first place, get some conception of the missionary purpose of this quarter, and will then study Abraham as one of the greatest missionary pioneers. Take some missionary pioneer of modern times to compare with him, choosing some missionary field in which your class is interested, such as Morrison in China, Judson in Burma, Moffat in Africa, John Williams in the South Seas, Gardiner in South America, Marcus Whitman in Oregon. Much pioneer work for missions remains to be done; urge the doing of it upon your class.

#### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Abraham's first year in Canaan (according to Prof. W. J. Beecher), B.C. 1928. Destruction of Sodom, B.C. 1904. Isaac born, B.C. 1903. The Isaac sacrifice, B.C. 1879. Death of Abraham, B.C. 1828.

**Place.** — Haran in Mesopotamia. Beersheba. Jerusalem.

JESUS TEACHING

H. Hofmann

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The character of Abraham.
The evils of idolatry from which he fled.
The hardships Abraham endured.
The blessings Abraham gained.
Abraham a blessing to the world.
Missionary pioneers of to-day.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Abraham, a Religious Pioneer.**

I. The Call of Abraham, Gen. 12 : 1–4 ; Heb. 11 : 8–10.
   What Abraham left.
   What Abraham went to.
   Missions an adventure of faith.

II. The Promise to Abraham, Gen. 18 : 17, 18.
   Abraham's seeming insignificance.
   Abraham's wonderful significance.
   Our relation to world welfare.

III. The Testing of Abraham, Gen. 22 : 1–18 ; Heb. 11 : 17–19.
   The hopes wrapped up in Isaac.
   The triumph of obedience.
   How missionary faith is tested.

## THE LESSON IN ART.

See the lesson for April 8.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Horton's *The Bible a Missionary Book.* Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible.* Deane's *Abraham, His Life and Times.* Duff's *Abraham and the Patriarchal Age.* Beecher's *Bible Studies.* Dykes's *Abraham, the Friend of God.* Meyer's *Abraham, or the Obedience of Faith.* Scott's *The Life of Abraham.* Tomkins's *Abraham and His Age.* Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine.* Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible.* Parker's *Adam, Noah, and Abraham.* Townsend, in *Men of the Old Testament.* Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament.* Trumbull's *The Blood Covenant.* Clifford's *Daily Strength for Daily Living.* Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament.* Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Wells's *Bible Miniatures.* Geikie's *Old Testament Characters. Commentaries* on Genesis.

---

The Purpose of this Quarter's Lessons. — We are now, for the first time, to spend an entire quarter studying the great theme of missions. We are to review the whole Bible, and try to gain some clear idea of its missionary purpose. "Undoubtedly no one can miss the missionary teaching of the Bible who knows what the Bible is, and while many ignore or try to ignore the Bible altogether, there are some who never come to the knowledge of it or receive the full impact of its teaching because they are too much tangled in its details. . . . We seldom read the Bible in large stretches, a book or a group of books at a time We usually know it only in chapters, or even in verses. The wide sweep of its thought and the development of its purpose traced through age after age and transition after transition, are either left out of account altogether or are considered only by devout students whose critical and historical methods invest their conclusions with an antiquated or paradoxical air." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D., in "The Bible a Missionary Book."*

To take this wide and inspiring missionary sweep of the Bible is the object of our quarter's studies.

I. **THE CALL OF ABRAHAM**, Gen. 12 : 1–4 ; Heb. 11 : 8–10. *Abram's Name* means "the father (*ab*) is exalted" (*ram*).

*His Father* was Terah, who lived in Ur of the Chaldees, a town in southern Babylonia on the right bank of the Euphrates, more than one hundred miles southeast of Babylon. It was an important place, on the main route between Arabia and Syria, and was the chief place of worship of the moon-god, Sin, in Southern Babylonia. The site has been excavated in modern times, with interesting discoveries.

*Abram's Wife* was Sarai (afterwards changed to *Sarah*, as Abram became *Abraham*), who was his half-sister, the daughter of Terah by another wife. Such a marriage was allowed in those days, though forbidden later. She was a woman of a noble spirit and of great force of character.

GEN. 12 : 1. Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee:

2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:

*Abram's Training,* amid all the heathenism and idolatry that surrounded him, was an education in the true religion. The wickedness and shame of idolatry, its cruelty, its licentiousness, and its stupidity, seem to have weighed upon the heart of his father Terah, so that he began a migration to Canaan, where he expected greater freedom to worship the one true God. So he took all his family, sons and sons' wives and their children, and set out on the long journey. But for some reason not given us he got no farther than Haran, five hundred and fifty miles to the northwest of Ur. Haran was the meeting-place of the caravan routes from Damascus in the west, Nineveh in the east, and Babylon in the south. It was one of the chief Mesopotamian towns, and was situated on the left bank of the river Bĕlikh, seventy miles north of the juncture of that river with the Euphrates. At Haran Crassus fell in battle with the Parthians. Haran, like Ur, was a center of worship of the moon-god Sin, and it is one of the tragedies of the Bible that this heroic pioneer of the faith was not more heroic, that he did not "carry through," but after setting forth so nobly for Canaan settled down ignominiously halfway there, and died at last in Haran in the midst of the heathenism he detested. His was a missionary effort that failed.

Babylonian Idols.

1. **Now Jehovah said unto Abram.** Abram's name was changed to Abraham ("father of a multitude") when the patriarch was ninety-nine years old, as a token of the coming fulfilment of God's covenant with him (Gen. 17 : 1–5). We are not told how Jehovah spoke to Abram, whether audibly, or by impressions made upon his mind, perhaps starting with the words of Terah. In any case, Abram had no doubt what the message was, and who spoke it. **Get thee out of thy country.** Abram had spent his mature years in Haran, and had doubtless become attached to it. **And from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.** Abram was to leave behind him his people, and most of his relatives. He was to become a homeless wanderer. He never owned land in Canaan, except enough for a burial place. Thus the missionaries in foreign countries are often unable to buy land and houses, and must live in hired quarters all their lives. **Unto the land that I will show thee.** He was not told what the land was, and this made an additional test of his faith. "He went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11 : 8). Thus a young missionary, when he offers himself to the board, makes no stipulation where he is to go, but goes wherever the board thinks best to send him.

Babylonian God.
From a frieze in the British Museum.

2. **And I will make of thee a great nation.** "Jehovah does not tell Abram where he is to go, but he gives him a promise that would take him anywhere." — *Prof. H. G. Mitchell.* The thing that is put to the front in this promise is not Abram's private blessing, but the large national blessing that is to come through him. Missionaries get great joy in their work, but they almost forget it in the joy of their con-

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

4. So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Hā′-răn.

verts. **And I will bless thee, and make thy name great.** God did not say what blessings he would give Abram, except that he should be widely honored; but God is so great that all his gifts are great, and Abram knew that all material and spiritual joys were hidden in this promise. **And be thou a blessing.** This probably means, not "Do thou confer blessings on others," for that has already been said, but "Be thou a model of blessedness," so that when men want a perfect example of blessedness they shall point to Abram.

3. **And I will bless them that bless thee.** Abram's blessing is to extend to his friends; just to be among his friends will be a rare privilege. How true this is of every friend of God! **And him that curseth thee will I curse.** Note the singular number; God kindly implies that Abram will have many friends, but only one foe, if that. And if Abram has an enemy, God will be an enemy to *him!* **And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** The translation here is a little uncertain, but the meaning is plain: Abram's life, with all that it means, is to win universal and blessed significance, is to become a happy part of the world-life. This can only be through the universal reign of Abram's descendant, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Christian missions are rapidly completing the fulfilment of this vast promise.

4. **So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him.** Obedience — prompt, complete, unquestioning, rejoicing — this is the key to Abraham's life. And it is the key to all missionary success. **And Lot went with him.** Lot was Abram's nephew, the son of his brother Haran, who had died in Ur. It is part of the missionary spirit to wish to carry along in the missionary enterprise as many as possible. Note the company that attended Paul in his missionary journeys; note the group that were the first to set out from America for foreign missions; note the Yale Band and other missionary groups. **And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.** Abraham died (Gen. 25 : 7) at the age of 175, so that he still had a century to live. He was still a young man, as age was counted in those days. Most men and women go to the mission field while young, which is by far the best; some, however, make the great decision late in life, and still accomplish much for the Master.

Bedouin Encampment.

What Abraham Went to. "Every thoughtful student of Bible history will recognize, in the geographical position of Palestine, certain conditions which eminently fitted it for the purpose to which God destined it. Not by accident did that strip of Syrian territory become the theater of sacred events, the home of the covenant people, and the seat of divine revelation. There was no other region on the earth's surface which could have answered so well. (1) It unites, as no other does, the two indispensable conditions of central position and yet of isolation. (2) It combined to an unusual degree high agricultural fertility with exposure to sudden and severe disasters. (3) Hardly any regions offer so few temptations to corrupt the simplicity of their inhabitants or better facilities for the defence of their liberties." — *Hastings.* Thus at the start of the missionary enterprise in every land the missionaries have sought strategic positions, and usually have found them.

GEN. 18:17. And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do;

But in going to this land where the pure religion would have a chance to grow, since the local heathenism was comparatively weak, Abraham faced many hardships. He was a stranger. He left behind h m many dear ties. He found it difficult to maintain himself and his family and dependents. He had to contend against ill-will and suspicion and hatred. He could see no permanent results of his labors. He lived on faith till the last. But his faith held strong, for he was of pioneer stuff, and he was a friend of God.

MISSIONS AN ADVENTURE OF FAITH. The work in every mission field of the world has been reared on faith's foundations. The first missionaries who left America for a foreign field went out not knowing whither they were going. Most of the little party settled in India, but Judson found himself at last in Burma. All missionaries leave the matter of their support in the hands of the boards. Their salaries may be decreased as the gifts fall off. The schools they open may be closed later for lack of funds. Mobs may assail them. They may face the horrors of massacres, as in China and Turkey. War may wipe out the labors of years. They run the risk of severe diseases, as in central Africa. In many lands they confront a thousand perils from savagery or from the anger of heathen impostors whose hold on the superstitious people the missionaries are loosening. But all these crosses the missionaries bear gladly, knowing that the Son of God is bearing them as a comrade.

II. **THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM**, Gen. 18:17, 18. We now pass over a quarter-century of the history. Abraham with his large company (some reckon it at two thousand souls) safely made the journey across or around the great desert to Canaan, where he moved from place to place with his flocks and herds, always setting up an altar to the true God. With magnanimity he allowed Lot to choose whatever part of the land he preferred. With equal magnanimity and great courage, when Chedorlaomer captured Lot and his goods, Abraham hastened in pursuit and defeated him. More than once Abraham's faith was upheld by a repetition of the great promise, and we have before us still another of those repetitions. God knows that his servants have hard work to do in winning the world for him, and he is eager to strengthen them with all comfort and encouragement.

Abraham's Oak.

Traditional place where Abraham entertained the three men under the oak.

17. **And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do.** Abraham had been hospitable to three strangers, and thus had "entertained angels unawares," for they were divine messengers (one of them was the Lord himself) sent to assure him that a son should be born to his old age. At the same time they were to bring destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah for their great wickedness. It was this intention which Jehovah said within himself he would not hide from Abraham.

18. Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

18. **Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation.** God had entered into covenant with Abraham, and this promise was to seal the covenant. God will reveal his will to the children of his covenant. **And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?** Since Abraham was to be the channel of blessing to all the world, God gave him the chance to be a blessing at once to the cities of the plain near at hand. Abraham was quick to seize the opportunity with his prayers of intercession: "Spare the city if there are fifty righteous in it! if there are forty-five! if there are forty! if there are thirty! if there are twenty! if there are ten!" Each prayer was readily granted, but Abraham stopped too soon. He was not near enough to the all loving heart of God. He should have prayed for the sparing of the city even if there was not a single righteous person in it. Paul knew that there is "no one righteous, no not one," and yet he approached the wickedest cities sure of plucking many brands from the burning. All missionaries have this confident expectation.

Abraham and Isaac on Their Way to the Sacrifice.

Our Relation to World Welfare. A missionary is a man who lives in the larger aspects of life. He has learned that he is his brother's keeper. The majority, when they hear of some wrong or sorrow in a distant land, shrug their shoulders and say, "No affair of mine." But whoever has a missionary soul finds "nothing human foreign to him," as it is not foreign to his Master. If a sad heart is ten thousand miles away, he has the generous impulse to go and carry comfort. He has heard the Saviour's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," and he longs to obey. It must be proved to him not that he ought to go, but that he ought to stay home. The true Christian is a citizen of the world, a brother to the farthest as well as to the nearest.

III. **THE TESTING OF ABRAHAM**, Gen. 22:1–18; Heb. 11:17–19. The birth of Isaac meant wonderful things to Abraham. It meant the miracle of new life in his home. It meant the satisfaction of knowing that his line would be continued. It meant the amazement of a birth at his and his wife's great age. But most of all it meant the fulfilment of God's promise to him. It was the crown on God's covenant. It was the assurance of the remainder of the covenant, the nation that was to spring from him, and the blessing that was to come through him to the whole earth.

All of this was wrapped up in that lad; and so, when the command came unmistakably from Jehovah that Isaac should be offered up in sacrifice, it was the most severe test of Abraham's faith that could be made. It was a test that reached to the very roots of his life, — his love, his hope, his faith, all his plans, all his past, present, and future.

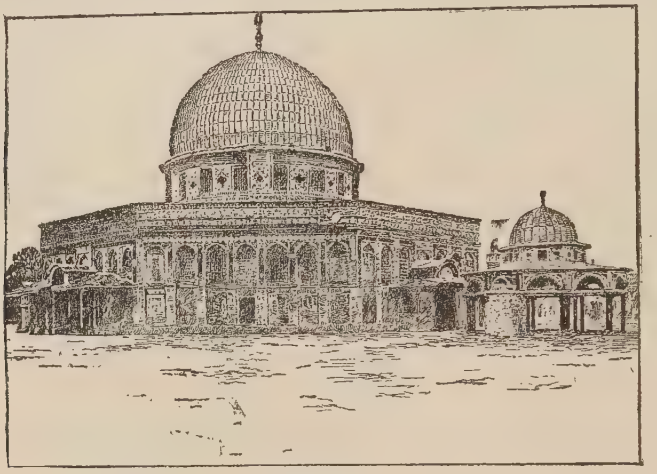
Therefore when Abraham, that sorrowful morning, rose early, split the wood for the burning, and with two servants and his son set out for Mount Moriah, he was already in his heart offering one of the most superb sacrifices the world has known.

GEN. 22 : 15. And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven,

16. And said, By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son,

Abraham was then living at Beersheba, in the south of Canaan, and Mount Moriah was probably the hill in Jerusalem on which afterwards the temple stood. The rock of the sacrifice was in that case the large rock in the center of the temple platform under the dome of the Mosque of Omar, "The Dome of the Rock."

It was a three-days journey to the place. As the sad procession approached, Abraham bade the servants remain behind, while he laid the wood for the altar on



Mosque of Omar.

Isaac's back, and the father and son began to climb the hill. There is no more pathetic bit of dialogue in the Bible than this : *Isaac :* "My father !" *Abraham :* "Here am I, my son." *Isaac:* "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" *Abraham :* "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering."

The tragic scene continued : the altar erected, the wood laid in order upon it, Isaac bound and laid upon the wood, the father's hand stretched forth to slay his son. But obedience had gone far enough ; no more proof was wanted. A voice from heaven stayed the knife, and a ram caught by his horns in the thicket near by was substituted for Isaac. So Abraham gave the place the famous name, Jehovah-jireh, "God will provide," the words that Abraham had used in answering Isaac.

The entire scene, with all its beautiful and mystic meaning, reaches forward for fifteen centuries to the greatest event of the world's history, the sacrifice of the Lamb of God near Mount Moriah. God in that supreme act again provided a Lamb for a burnt-offering, and this time it was for the sins of the world, and sacrificed once for all, that needs not to be repeated. The telling of that perfect illustration of the love of God for his children is the blessed task of the missionary. By the telling of that story he is winning the world.

15. **And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven.** He had called for the first time (v. 11) when he bade Abraham cease in his sacrifice of Isaac.

16. **And said, By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah.** In swearing by himself Jehovah confirmed his promise in the most solemn and inviolable way (Heb. 6 : 13–18). **Because thou hast done this thing.** God loves to reward our faith, not because it deserves reward, but to encourage us to more faith. **And hast not withheld thy son, thine only son.** God wants us to give him our dearest and best, not that he may rob us or deprive us of any good thing, but that he may restore the gift to us vastly

17. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

---

enriched and beautified. Many a father and mother have learned this in giving to the cause of missions their dearly beloved son or daughter.

17. **That in blessing I will bless thee.** "I will greatly bless thee." This was the sixth time that God had blessed Abraham. The Lord does not stint his blessings if we are capable of receiving them.

> "Thou art rich, Thou art kind, Thou art free;
> What joy shall be failing to me
> Whom Thou lovest? Thy smile and Thy kiss
> Can give me back all that I miss;
> In Thy presence is fulness of bliss;
> I ask not its nature! I know
> It is life, it is youth, it is love;
> It is all that is wanting below,
> It is all that is waiting above." — *Dora Greenwell.*

**And in multiplying I will multiply thy seed.** To a Hebrew, who thought so much of his family, this promise was especially precious. **As the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore.** The visible stars seem innumerable, and indeed in the Milky Way they cannot be counted by the unaided eye, while the telescope, as it peers deeper and deeper into the sky, has always thus far found more stars to count. Such is the experience of God's children as they explore the depths of God's goodness and tender mercy. **And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.** "The word *gate* is often used in the Old Testament by synecdoche for town or city. To possess the gate of one's enemies, therefore, is to subdue and control them." — *Bible for Home and School.*

18. **And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.** "Through Abraham and his descendants man everywhere would come to know God as One and Holy, and to long for 'the Desire of all nations.'" — *Dummelow.* **Because thou hast obeyed my voice.** "Literally, 'because thou hast heard,' or 'listened to.' God's word may be a sound that is not heard; or it may be a sound which is heard, but not listened to; or it may be a sound which is heard, listened to, and obeyed." — *Cambridge Bible.* Abraham's was the fullest hearing of God's voice; so is a missionary's to-day.

HOW MISSIONARY FAITH IS TESTED. "God asks for your child to be a missionary. He is ordained from birth to go forth, not to make a fortune, or build an everlasting name, but to be the real friend of the lost, the brotherly keeper of the needy; and you say, 'No! it is too much! What have I been building this business for? I should have left it years ago, only I wanted it for him! I cannot.' And so you thrust your mammon-sharpened knife through your son's spiritual nature, and slay him in the name of wealth." — *Rev. John Clifford, D.D.*

Every mission field has tested severely the faith of the workers. Robert Morrison, the pioneer missionary to China, labored for seven disheartening years before he won his first convert, and he gained only ten converts in all his twenty-seven years of work. The Lone Star (Telugu) mission in southern India was founded in 1836. The success there was so slight that again and again it was proposed to give it up and transfer the workers to Burma. In 1865, when John E. Clough was sent there, he found only twenty-five converts in the entire Telugu country; but on July 3, 1878, *no fewer than 2,222 Telugu converts were baptized in a single day*, and nine thousand were received by the end of the year. Similar stories may be told of all mission fields, at home and abroad.

"A Scotch missionary went to West Africa in 1882, and lived for some years in perfect loneliness in the midst of savage tribes. But they learned to respect him, and to marvel at his courage and unselfishness. His triumph was all based on a growing faith. He wrote home and confessed the secret. 'I am just beginning to realize that God's promises are not words written for the instruction of our minds, but certainties to go by, and the assurance of one of them is better than the presence of an army.'" — *J. A. Clapperton.*

That assurance of faith was the secret of Abraham's power and success.

## LESSON II. — October 14.

## ISRAEL, A MISSIONARY NATION. — Exodus 19 : 1–6; Isaiah 43 : 9–11; 45 : 20–22.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.* — Ex. 19 : 6.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 100.
**Reference Material** : Isa. 41 : 8–14; 45 : 14–17; Rom. 9 : 1–5.
**Primary Topic** : GOD'S KINDNESS TO HIS PEOPLE.
**Lesson Material** : Ex. 19 : 1–6.
**Story Material** : Ex. 14 : 10–23, 26, 27, 30, 31.
**Memory Verse** : Surely goodness and lovingkindness shall follow me all the days of my life. Ps. 23 : 6.
**Junior Topic** : WHY GOD CHOSE ISRAEL.
**Lesson Material** : Ex. 19 : 1–6; Isa. 43 : 9–11; 45 : 20–22.
**Memory Verse** : Isa. 45 : 22.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : THE MISSION OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : ISRAEL'S MISSIONARY CALL.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will use only the Exodus passage, and will think about God's goodness to his people, as shown in rescuing them from slavery and caring for them in the wilderness. Go on to show how kind God is to all that will be his people, and how he longs to help the heathen people who reject him.

**The Older Classes**, including the Junior, will study the wonderful position of the Jews among the nations. Bring out the character of this remarkable people, who for thousands of years have preserved the true religion against the fiercest assaults of paganism. Try to fill with real meaning for your pupils the words, "the chosen people," and give them a sense of God's providence in human history. Show also that Christian missions are carrying on this long chain of events and are completing God's purpose for the Jews.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The Israelites at Sinai, B.C. 1498 (Beecher). Isaiah's prophecies studied in this lesson, B.C. 700.

**Place.** — Mt. Sinai, between the two arms of the Red Sea. Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

#### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why God chose the Jews as his people.
How God showed the Jews that they were his chosen.
God's purpose for the world by means of the Jews.
Moses as an instrument for carrying out God's purpose with his people.
What the prophets did toward accomplishing God's missionary purpose for his people.
Christianity as a continuance of the chosen people.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Mission of God's Chosen People.**

I. A HOLY NATION, Ex. 19 : 1–6.
Moses in the presence of Jehovah.
Borne on eagles' wings.
God's own possession.

II. A WITNESSING NATION, Isa. 43 : 9–11.
The silent nations.
A nation that knows God.
A nation that points to God.

III. A SAVIOUR FOR ALL NATIONS, Isa. 45 : 20–22.
Gods that cannot save.
No God but Jehovah.
Look to him, and be saved.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*Commentaries* on Exodus and Isaiah. Thoburn's *The Christian Conquest of India*. Zwemer's *Religions of Mission Fields*. Murray's *The Two Covenants*. Spurgeon's *Sermons, First Series*. Newton's *Olney Hymns*.

**I. A HOLY NATION,** Ex. 19 : 1–6. The Israelites had been led out of their Egyptian bondage by the merciful might of Jehovah, a redemption which ever after stood out as the one supreme blessing of their history. It marked them as God's people, a relation promised to their great founder, Abraham, as we studied last week, and confirmed under most impressive circumstances which we are now to study.

Ex. 19:1. In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sĭ'-nāi.

2. And when they were departed from Rĕph'-ĭ-dĭm, and were come to the wilderness of Sĭ'-nāi, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mount.

3. And Moses went up unto God, and Jehovah called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:

1. **In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt.** This was the month Sivan, corresponding to our May-June. The intervening time had been spent on the journey to Sinai. **The same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.** Possibly the first day of the month; possibly the day had been named in connection with "the third month" but had been accidentally dropped out. The "wilderness of Sinai" is probably the plain called er-Rahah, at the foot of "the Mount of God," a plain about four miles long and more than a mile wide, and, with the adjacent valleys, entirely suitable for a camping-ground.

2. **And when they were departed from Rephidim.** A camping-ground not far back of Sinai, where the people murmured until Moses brought water out of a rock, and where the Israelite warriors won a victory over the Amalekites as Moses' hands were held up in prayer by Aaron and Hur. **And were come to the wilderness of Sinai.** That encampment proved to be one of the focal points in the world's history, since there the central core of the world's law was proclaimed. **They encamped in the wilderness.** Their number has been variously estimated — more than two million souls, say eminent scholars. **And there Israel encamped before the mount.** Mount Sinai, also called Mount Horeb. Tradition points to a ridge about two miles long, with two peaks: Ras es-Sufsafeh, or the Peak of Willows, on the north, facing the plain er-Rahah and ending in a precipitous cliff; and, on the south, Jebel Mûsa, or Mount of Moses. The former is 6,540 feet high; the latter, 7,363 feet.

From a photograph by Wilson

The Sinai Valley toward the Plain of er-Rahah.

3. **And Moses went up unto God.** "From the time of his call Moses had known that Israel was to serve God upon Sinai (Ex. 3:12), and had regarded either one special peak or the whole range as 'the mount of God' — a place dedicated and set apart to Jehovah. It was natural, therefore, that, so soon as he reached the near vicinity of the mount, he should ascend it." — *Rawlinson.* **And Jehovah called unto him out of the mountain.** "It is (v. 6) not to be assumed that the people heard the words which are recorded as spoken to Moses." — *Prof. James McGregor.* **Saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob.** The Hebrews, descendants of Jacob; the twelve tribes. "The house of Jacob" occurs nowhere else in the Pentateuch. **And tell the children of Israel.** Israel was Jacob's other name, given him after he

4. Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine:

had prevailed with the angel at the Jabbok. This expression "resumes all the past, from the time when first the covenant promise was given." — *Hand-books for Bible Classes.*

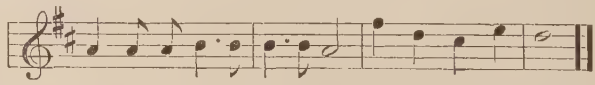
4. **Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians.** God's deliverance of his people from their slavery in Egypt, so plainly miraculous, was an earnest of what they might expect from him in the future if they obeyed him. As Cromwell said, they had got good wages beforehand. **And how I bare you on eagles' wings.** There is a similar thought in the Song of Moses, Deut. 32 : 10, 11. "A fine figure for the swiftness, the security, and the affectionate care with which the deliverance from Egypt had been effected." — *Prof. S. R. Driver.* The exact bird intended is (Tristram's *Natural History of the Bible*) the griffon-vulture, "a large and majestic bird, very abundant in Palestine, and constantly seen there circling in the air." **And brought you unto myself.** To Mt. Sinai, God's abode, "the Mount of God."

Vultures.

5. **Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed.** "Obey" is literally "harken to." God speaks to us in his Book, in the voice of the Holy Spirit, in the utterances of his servants, in the movements of his providence, in the beauties and wonders of the natural world, and in the admonitions of our consciences. Obedience to God involves harkening to all God's voices.

*Illustration.* "When George Müller spoke of the great happiness he had had for more than sixty years in God's service, he attributed it to two things — he had loved God's Word, and 'he had maintained a good conscience, not wilfully going on in a course he knew to be contrary to the mind of God.' When the full light of God broke in upon Gerhard Tersteegen, he wrote: 'I promise, with thy help and power, rather to give up the last drop of my blood, than knowingly and willingly in my heart or my life be untrue and disobedient to thee.'" — *Andrew Murray.*

**And keep my covenant.** The covenant is God's promise to care for Israel, if the people will obey him. Like all covenants, there is a promise on each side. "The Old Testament" is, literally, "The Old Covenant," and "The New Testament" is "The New Covenant" sealed with the blood of Christ.



He watching over Is-ra-el, slumbers not nor sleeps.

**Then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples.** "Mine own possession" is "in Hebrew a single word, *segullâ*, commonly used of Israel as the chosen and precious possession of God." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett.* The Hebrews are thus chosen out of all the nations, being preferred above them all. **For all the earth is mine.** Since all nations belong to God, he can select the nation he considers best to be his own especial people. "A king, though his children be his subjects, has no other subjects that are his own as his children are his own." — *McGregor.*

6. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Isa. 43:9. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the peoples be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

10. Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

---

6. **And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests.** "A kingdom whose citizens are all priests, living wholly in God's service, and ever enjoying the right of access to him." — *Cambridge Bible.*

"Bless'd inhabitants of Zion,
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood!
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God.
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings,
And as priests his solemn praises
Each for a thank-offering brings." — *John Newton.*

**And a holy nation.** "A nation set apart for the work of Jehovah. The words express the same idea as the previous phrase." — *New Century Bible.* They also imply the duty of the people to make themselves worthy of their high destiny, to keep themselves free from sin and to be earnest and strong for the right. **These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.** This Moses immediately proceeded to do, passing the words along through the elders of the people (v. 7).

II. **A WITNESSING NATION**, Isa. 43:9–11. Our first passage relates to the very beginning of the history of God's chosen people. We now pass over eight centuries, and find the chosen people at almost the lowest point of their fortunes, beset by powerful foes, and on the brink of exile. Even then, however, through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, God renewed his promises to Israel. Our passage is from the portion of Isaiah called the Book of Consolation, foretelling the restoration of the nation through the instrumentality of Cyrus.

9. **Let all the nations be gathered together.** The prophet's vision sees all the nations of the world brought together as in a vast courtroom. They are "the blind people that have eyes and the deaf that have ears" (v. 8); that is, they have seen and heard the facts of history but they lack spiritual insight to interpret those facts. **And let the peoples be assembled.** This may be translated, "and the peoples are assembled." **Who among them can declare this.** What idol-worshipping nation can rise to the height of the splendid prophecy of a forgiving and restoring God which Isaiah has just uttered (vs. 1–7)? **And show us former things?** "Earlier predictions verified by the event, as in Isa. 41:22." — *G. W. Wade, D.D.* **Let them bring their witnesses, that they may be justified.** Witnesses to show that the prophecy was actually uttered, and that its terms corresponded with the event that followed. **Or let them hear, and say, It is truth.** If (as is the case) the heathen nations cannot show anything corresponding to Hebrew prophecy, then let them hear that prophecy and acknowledge its truth.

10. **Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah.** The witnesses are all God's chosen people, the Israelites. Every one of them can testify to God's goodness, God's wisdom, and God's power. In the presence of the heathen nations let them speak up! **And my servant whom I have chosen.** "Ye people of Israel are my servant," selected by me to do my work, and your chief task is this of testifying of me to the heathen. **That ye may know and believe me.** God's people have not been sure of God, just because they have not been a testifying people. As soon as they begin to tell others about God's goodness and power, they will begin to realize it themselves. An evangelistic church is a believing church. **And understand that I am he.** Probably an allusion to the name Jehovah, "the I Am," the self-existent, eternal God. This attribute of God is brought out by just such a reverent survey of history as that to which Isaiah summons Israel. **Before me there was no God formed.** That is, the true God existed, uncreated and from eternity, before any false god was fashioned

11. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour.

ISA. 45 : 20. Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that carry the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.

21. Declare ye, and bring *it* forth; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath showed this from ancient time? who hath declared it of old? have not I, Jehovah? and there is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me.

22. Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.

---

by human fancy and human hands. **Neither shall there be after me.** The true God will outlive all the false gods of the heathen.

11. **I, even I, am Jehovah.** "The same God that under that name had intervened in the early history of Israel (see Ex. 3 : 14)." — *Westminster Commentary.* **And besides me there is no saviour.** Isaiah often speaks of God as the Saviour, the Deliverer of his people; see Isa. 43 : 3, etc. This magnificent passage constitutes the first message of the missionary to an idolatrous land.

III. **A SAVIOUR FOR ALL NATIONS**, Isa. 45 : 20–22. The verses we are now to study are part of "an important series of oracles dealing mainly with the mission of Cyrus and its effects in the universal diffusion of the worship of Jehovah." In these verses the prophet "reaches what may be regarded as the highest flight of his inspired imagination. As a consequence of the signal exaltation of Israel achieved through the victorious Cyrus, the conquered nations renounce their idols and do homage to Israel as the people of the true God (vs. 14–17). But further, this disclosure of the character and Godhead of Jehovah becomes the source of salvation to the world at large." — *Cambridge Bible.*

20. **Assemble yourselves and come.** Again, as in the verses just studied, foreign nations are summoned to the presence of Jehovah. **Draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations.** "This time the summons is not for judgment. The catastrophes are over, and it is only those who have escaped who are invited to God's presence. It is presumed, moreover, that the disciplinary chastisements of the past have opened their eyes to the truth." — *Rev. Owen C. Whitehouse, D.D.* **They have no knowledge that carry the wood of their graven image.** The reference is to wooden idols carried in processions, perhaps to avert a plague, or borne to a battle that they may bring victory; but they are always powerless. **And pray unto a god that cannot save.** Note the contrast closing the next verse: Jehovah is a God that *can* save.

21. **Declare ye, and bring it forth.** Bring forth whatever you have to say for yourselves, you nations that do not follow Jehovah. **Yea, let them take counsel together.** The matter is too important for one to decide alone; let them consult. **Who hath showed this from ancient time?** "'This' must refer to the conquest of Babylon and deliverance of Israel by Cyrus. None but Jehovah had ever announced this — none but he could bring it to pass." — *Rawlinson.* **Who hath declared it of old? have not I, Jehovah?** "The allusion is probably to predictions like those of Jeremiah (Jer. 30 : 3 f.; 31: 8)." — *Westminster Commentary.* **And there is no God else besides me.** The so-called gods of the heathen nations are *no* gods.

*Illustration.* Mohammedanism proves that the truth of the unity of the Godhead is not enough to constitute a saving religion. They emphasize this truth, but their God is a pitiless tyrant, and his heaven is a realm of lust. Mohammedanism keeps its followers ignorant and superstitious, holds them in polygamy, and horribly degrades their women. Of the sensuality of Mohammedanism Dr. Zwemer writes: "On this topic it is not possible to speak plainly nor to be wholly silent. One must live among Moslems to feel the blasting influence of this side of Islam on its followers." Such is the religion which on many mission fields, notably in Africa, is the chief rival of Christianity.

**A just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me.** "When they see what Jehovah does for Israel, and perceive that the Lord has performed for Israel just what he promised, then there is hope that they will recognize the one God, who is 'just' in keeping his word, and is in truth a Saviour of men." — *The Churchman's Bible.*

22. **Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.** Compare Ps.

98 : 3. "All the ends of the earth" means all the heathen nations that have been summoned by Jehovah. Their "look" must be the look of faith, and their salvation is to be the consequence of that look. They were to be saved from destruction by Cyrus, but a higher salvation, extending to all eternity, was also within their reach. **For I am God, and there is none else.** Here is half of the New Testament truth: "This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17 : 3). This is the great message of all missionaries.

*Illustration.* The Hindus often say, "God is one and without a second"; but they believe in millions of incarnations of Deity and every one of them is a god. "The average middle-class Hindu in his every-day life may worship any one or many of the following: (1) Mere stocks and stones and unusual local configurations; (2) Things inanimate, which are gifted with mysterious motion; (3) Animals which are feared; (4) Tools and visible things animate or inanimate, which are directly or indirectly useful or profitable; (5) *Deo*, or spirit, the vague impersonation of an uncanny sensation that comes over one at certain places; (6) Dead relatives and other deceased persons, who had a great reputation during life, or who died in some strange or notorious way at shrines; (7) Manifold demigods or subordinate deities; (8) The supreme gods of Hinduism, handed down by the Brahmanic scriptures." — *Bishop James M. Thoburn.* The Hindu gods are said to number 330,000,000, and they are worshipped in ways the most cruel, degrading, and revolting.

"How hath God poured contempt on the ancient gods of the heathen! Where are they now? Are they so much as known? Where are those false deities before whom the multitude of Nineveh prostrated themselves? Ask the moles and the bats, whose companions they are; or ask the mounds beneath which they are buried; or go where the idle gazer walketh through the museum — see them there as curiosities, and smile to think that men should ever bow before such gods as these. And where are the gods of Persia? Where are they? The fires are quenched, and the fire worshipper hath almost ceased out of the earth. Where are the gods of Greece? — those gods adorned with poetry, and hymned in the most sublime odes? Where are they? They are gone. Who talks of them now, but as things that were of old? Jupiter — doth any one bow before him? and who is he that adores Saturn? They are passed away, and they are forgotten. And where are the gods of Rome? Doth Janus now command the temple? or do the vestal virgins now feed the perpetual fires? Are there any now that bow before these gods? No, they have lost their thrones. And where are the gods of the South Sea Islands — those bloody demons before whom wretched creatures prostrated their bodies? They have well-nigh become extinct. Ask the inhabitants of China and Polynesia where are the gods before whom they bowed. Ask, and echo says ask, and ask again. They are cast down from their thrones; they are hurled from their pedestals; their chariots are broken, their sceptres are burnt in the fire, their glories are departed; God hath gotten unto himself the victory over false gods, and taught the worshippers that he is God, and that beside him there is none else." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

The Mission of Israel. Every student of history is forced to the same conclusion insisted upon in these passages of Scripture. The Hebrew race throughout the centuries to the days of Christ kept themselves holier than any other race, comparatively free from the vices and sins which affront the Creator and destroy his image in men. History agrees with the Book that Israel was the one people in whom God could work best, the only people to whom he could send his Son, the Redeemer of the world. That, amid all its failures and with many shameful spiritual disasters, Israel was true enough to its ideals to afford seed ground for Christianity is its lasting glory. In Christ its long history of grace came to a climax. Christ, as to the flesh, was a Jew. Peter, John, Luke, Matthew, Mark, Paul, all were Jews. The triumphs of Christianity are, in a sense, Jewish triumphs. When will the Jews accept their glorious inheritance?

"Rise, crowned with light, imperial Salem, rise;
Exalt thy towering head and lift thine eyes;
See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend.

"The seas shall waste, the skies to smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fixed His word, His saving power remains;
Thy realm shall last, thy own Messiah reigns." — *Alexander Pope.*

## LESSON III. — October 21.

# ISRAEL IN THE MIDST OF THE NATIONS. — Joshua 1 : 1–4; Deuteronomy 4 : 5, 6; 8 : 7–10; Isaiah 2 : 2–4; 19 : 23–25; Ezekiel 5 : 5.

**PRINT Josh. 1 : 1–4; Isa. 2 : 2–4; 19 : 23–25; Ezek. 5 : 5.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.* — Isa. 45 : 22.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 48 : 9–14.
**Primary Topic** : The Beautiful Land of Israel.
**Lesson Material** : Josh. 1 : 1–4; Deut. 8 : 7–14.
**Memory Verse** : Thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Deut. 8 : 10.
**Junior Topic** : The Land God Chose for His People.
**Lesson Material** : Josh. 1 : 1–4; Isa. 2 : 2–4; Ezek. 5 : 5.
**Memory Verse** : Isa. 2 : 2.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : Israel in the Midst of the Nations.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Strategic Position of Palestine.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will make this a lesson in the geography of the Holy Land. Give them some comprehensive idea of the size of the country, comparing it with points in your own locality familiar to them. Picture its beauties and its resources. They will not be too young to gain some idea of the central position of Palestine, and of the reasons that made it, small as it is, so influential in the history of the world.

**The Older Classes** will make a survey of the features of Palestine by topics, one pupil treating the bodies of water, another the food plants, others the trees, flowers, animals, climate, while the teacher brings out clearly the place of Palestine in God's providence and its strategic position with reference to other nations. This is a lesson of unique interest and value.

Fords of the Jordan near Jericho.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Joshua's entrance upon the Promised Land, B.C. 1458. Isaiah's prophecies, about B.C. 755–679. Ezekiel, about B.C. 593.

**Place.** — The Jordan opposite Jericho. Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem; Ezekiel, in Babylonia.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The situation of Palestine with reference to conquest.
The situation of Palestine with reference to communication.
The soil of Palestine and its products.
The water supply of Palestine.
The political influence of Palestine.
The spiritual influence of Palestine.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Land God Chose for His People.**

I. A Godly Land, Josh. 1 : 1–4; Deut. 4 : 5, 6; Isa. 2 : 2–4.
   A God-given land.
   A God-honoring land.

II. A Goodly Land, Deut. 8 : 7–14.
   The riches of Palestine.
   The responsibility of Palestine.

III. An Influential Land, Isa. 19 : 23–25; Ezek. 5 : 5.
   Between Egypt and Assyria.
   In the midst of the nations.

**THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.**

*Commentaries* on Deuteronomy, Joshua, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. Calkin's *Historical Geography of Bible Lands.* Macphie's *The Home-land of the Bible.* van Dyke's *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land.* William Walter Smith's *Students' Historical Geography of the Holy Land.* George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land.* Stewart's *The Land of Israel.*

JOSH. 1 : 1. Now it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nŭn, Moses' minister, saying,

2. Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses.

4. From the wilderness, and this Lĕb′-ă-nŏn, even unto the great river,

I. **A GODLY LAND**, Josh. 1 : 1–4; Deut. 4 : 5, 6; Isa. 2 : 2–4. We have studied the wonderful way in which God chose the people that should become the repository of the highest and best thought and ideals, the people to whom he could come nearest and to whom he could give the most, that they should pass it on to the other nations of the world. In this lesson we are to study the land which was chosen for the chosen people, taking some of the Bible's descriptions of that wonderful country, Palestine.

JOSH. 1 : 1. **Now it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of Jehovah.** No higher title was possible than that of this great leader of Israel, "the servant of Jehovah." He had served God for one hundred and twenty years, had proved himself the greatest lawmaker and nation-builder of all history, had exercised marvellous powers given him from God, and now his death might well seem to leave his people helpless. But not so, for they were God's people. **That Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister.** Moses' assistant, formally appointed. He led the Israelites in their victory over the Amalekites as soon as they had escaped from Egypt, he was with Moses in the sacred mount when the Law was given, he had charge of the first tabernacle, he alone (with Caleb) of the twelve spies brought back an encouraging report, and he had been publicly chosen by Moses to be his successor. No wiser choice could have been made.

2. **Moses my servant is dead.** Such announcements must continually be made in the history of God's people. Leaders pass away, but the kingdom of God never passes away. **Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan.** "Therefore," just because Moses was dead, Joshua was bidden to do something that Moses had been unable to do! God expects every worker to "stand on the shoulders of his predecessor." Moses was much greater than Joshua, but he bequeathed to Joshua the results of all his work, to which Joshua had to add only a little in order to accomplish greater results than Moses. **Thou, and all this people.** The total population led by Joshua was about two millions. **Unto the land which I do give to them.** What about the people already dwelling in the land, the Canaanites? In the first place, they had abused the good gift of God, following the evil course of heathenism, doing wickedness that their consciences must have condemned; and in the second place, populations were very sparse in those days, and there was ample room for both Israelites and Canaanites in Palestine, as there was ample room in North America for both the Indians and the whites. **Even to the children of Israel.** Israel, the God-given name of Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes.

3. **Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon.** The land was to be theirs, every foot of it, but only as their feet were advanced to take possession of it. As a matter of fact, their faith and obedience were not equal to God's promise, so that much of the land, especially all the region along the Mediterranean, was left in the hands of the original inhabitants, who harassed the Hebrews throughout their history, and sadly polluted their moral and religious life. **To you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses.** This and the following verse are an almost exact quotation of Deut. 11 : 24, 25.

4. **From the wilderness.** The sandy, barren region south of Palestine, where the Israelites had been wandering for forty years. It has never been a settled country. **And this Lebanon.** The Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges, on the north of Pales-

the river Eū-phrā′-tēş, all the land of the Hĭt′-tītes, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.

Isa. 2: 2. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

tine, were the highest portion of the territory, especially Mt. Hermon, whose snow-clad summit is visible from all parts of Palestine, hence the word "this." **Even unto the great river, the river Euphrates.** The Euphrates, far to the east of Palestine, was the greatest river known to the Hebrews. We see here how far God's promise exceeded the faith of the Jews, for it gave them all Mesopotamia, and the vast empire of Nineveh and Babylon. But they would not enter in to possess it. **All the land of the Hittites.** The Hittites were a vast and powerful people occupying the region between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, north of Palestine, including Syria and Asia Minor. **And unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun.** The Mediterranean, on the west of Palestine, was always the Great Sea to the Hebrews; they knew nothing of the greater sea, the Atlantic Ocean. **Shall be your border.** This was like a magnificent check filled out and signed by the Almighty, and needing only to be presented at the Bank of Faith and it would be honored. But the Hebrews asked only for a partial payment.

Photograph by Wilson.
Mount Hermon from the Damascus Road.

Isa. 2 : 2. **And it shall come to pass in the latter days.** The splendid prophecy we are to study belongs to the very earliest period of Isaiah's long ministry, but summarizes much of his teaching. "The latter days" means a time indefinitely in the future. **That the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains.** "The mountain of Jehovah's house" is the temple mount, the eastern of Jerusalem's two principal hills. **And shall be exalted above the hills.** It is now overtopped by many hills near by (the Mount of Olives is nearly three hundred feet higher), but is to be lifted up higher than all of them, so that it can be seen by men from a great distance and can draw them to itself. **And all nations shall flow unto it.** The picture is of great masses of peoples moving toward Jerusalem like streams from all parts of the world. Our thought of missions is the same in effect but the opposite in symbolism, — that of streams of blessing flowing from Christian nations to all parts of the earth. Christ said that if he were lifted up on the cross, he would draw all men unto him.

3. **And many peoples shall go and say.** "The prophecy means to represent the nations as encouraging one another on the way. There is no jealousy among them, for the 'mountain' can hold them all." — *Rawlinson.* **Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah.** It has ever been thus in the history of missions: as one people becomes evangelized, it seeks to evangelize others. Many of the most self-sacrificing gifts for missionary work come each year from the poor, pinched purses

4. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

of the native converts themselves. Thus they say to other heathen lands, "Come ye." **To the house of the God of Jacob.** The God "of Jacob" is mentioned because the thought is of God's covenant made with Jacob, and now renewed through Isaiah. **And he will teach us of his ways.** "'Out of the treasure of his ways,' not 'concerning his ways.'" — *International Critical Commentary.* **And we will walk in his paths.** "The 'ways' and the 'paths' are the great laws of righteousness, which lead to the eternal life." — *Ellicott.* **For out of Zion shall go forth the law.** "Zion" is the temple hill. Out of Judaism went forth Christianity, and Christianity is winning the world, thus fulfilling this prediction. **And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.** "The word of Jehovah" is the same as "the law" — God's spoken word, God's written word, the Word that "was made flesh and dwelt among us." God had of old commanded his people to keep his law, "for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples" (Deut. 4 : 5, 6). The nations were to honor the Hebrews in proportion as the Hebrews honored the law of God.

4. **And he will judge between the nations.** "Since all nations will acknowledge the Lord, disputes will be settled by him instead of by the arbitrament of the sword." — *Westminster Commentary.* **And will decide concerning many peoples.** War is always opposed to the will of God, though sometimes it may be necessary in order to avoid still greater evils. Just in proportion as the will of God comes to rule in the world, war will be abolished. With the full sway of the gospel of Christ in all men's hearts, war will be forever impossible. **And they shall beat their swords into plowshares.** Perhaps "mattocks" are meant instead of ploughshares. The Disarmament Conference in Washington in 1922 was a long step in this direction. **And their spears into pruning-hooks.** The pruning-hook was "a sickle-shaped knife, small enough to be made from the metal of a spear-point." — *B. S. Easton.* **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation.** Rather shall they stretch out hands of helpfulness to other nations, as already they are beginning to do in many forms of charity, of coöperation, and of friendly intercourse. **Neither shall they learn war any more.** Countless ages of human life, in the aggregate, have been wasted in planning devices of slaughter and drilling men to kill. All that time and strength and interest will some day be turned into productive, happy, and righteous channels, to the enormous gain of the human race.

Pomegranate Blossom and Fruit.

II. **A GOODLY LAND,** Deut. 8 : 7–14. This passage, which is part of the lesson chosen for the Primary Classes, is the description of the promised land set before the Israelites by Moses as they were about to enter Canaan. It is called "a good land," and the elements of the goodness are set forth with enthusiasm :

1. It was "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills." Coming from the desert, Canaan seemed indeed to them a well-watered land, which it indeed is on the whole, though many parts must be supplied by collecting the rain in tanks or cisterns.

2. It was "a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey." Most of these are still the chief products of the land,

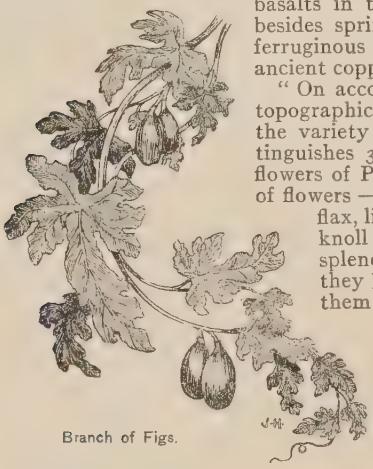
ISA. 19: 23. In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Ăs-sўr′-ĭ-ȧ, and the Ăs-sўr′-ĭ-ăn shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Ăs-sўr′-ĭ-ȧ; and the Egyptians shall worship with the Ăs-sўr′-ĭ-ănṣ.

24. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Ăs-sўr′-ĭ-ȧ, a blessing in the midst of the earth;

---

and grow abundantly. The crops were so rich that there was no danger of famine or want.

3. It was "a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper." Most of the hills of Palestine are of limestone, but there are iron-bearing basalts in the west and iron is found on Mt. Lebanon, besides springs impregnated with iron near Tiberias, and ferruginous earth near Mt. Hermon. There are traces of ancient copper works in the Lebanon region.



Branch of Figs.

"On account of the great diversity in the climate and topographical conditions Palestine is peculiarly rich in the variety of its flora — the best authority, Post, distinguishes 3,500 species." — *E. W. G. Masterman.* The flowers of Palestine are wonderful. "The fields are full of flowers — red anemones, white and yellow daisies, pink flax, little blue bell-flowers — a hundred kinds. One knoll is covered with cyclamens; another with splendid purple iris, immense blossoms, so dark that they look almost black against the grass; but hold them up to the sun and you will see the imperial color." — *Henry van Dyke.*

"One other feature may be noted, showing the suitability of Palestine as the land of the Book. That feature is, great diversity within small compass. The remarkable contrast of elevation from the low-lying valley of the Jordan, the plains of the coast, and Esdraelon, with the highlands of Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, the highlands beyond the Jordan and the Lebanons, gives corresponding diversity of temperature, plants, animals, products, industries and habits of the people. The whole earth is in a measure epitomized in this little country. Accordingly the literature of the people, its figures and illustrations, easily become intelligible to all peoples, and the Book of this land is suited to become the Book of all lands." — *John B. Calkin.*

III. **AN INFLUENTIAL LAND**, Isa. 19: 23–25; Ezek. 5: 5. Isaiah's nineteenth chapter deals with Egypt, painting first the ruin and terror which Jehovah will bring upon that mighty empire, and then the conversion of the people to the true religion and its blessed effects upon them. Our verses are from this second half of the chapter.

ISA. 19: 23. **In that day.** The day of Egypt's conversion to the true and pure religion of the Jews. **There shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria.** The religion of Jehovah is a religion of peace, and it will have for its first effect the establishment of peace between the world's two greatest enemies, Egypt and Assyria. They are to be united by a peaceful channel of communication, which must pass through Palestine. The Lord's country is to be the physical link between them as his religion is the spiritual link. **And the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria.** No longer as cruel and angry soldiers, but as quiet travellers and friendly traders. **And the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians.** The meaning is made plain by the context: both the Assyrians and the Egyptians shall worship Jehovah.

24. **In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria.** The unique preëminence of Israel as the only nation worshipping Jehovah, the only monotheistic nation, will be gloriously broken up. A Triple Alliance is to be formed in honor of the one God. **A blessing in the midst of the earth.** An echo of the promise made to Abraham ages before that in him should "all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12: 3). God's promises bind his Book together.

25. For that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Ăs-sȳr′-ĭ-à the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

Ezek. 5:5. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her.

25. **For that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them.** "Jehovah of hosts," "the Lord of armies," hints at God's power to carry out the fullest terms of his blessings. **Saying, Blessed be Egypt my people.** Israel had been hitherto God's people, his *only* people. Now Egypt also is to be called by that precious name. In the face of such passages as this it is hard to understand the stupidity of those that charge Judaism with being a cold and exclusive religion, a non-missionary religion. **And Assyria the work of my hands.** Another term that had been applied exclusively to Israel. **And Israel mine inheritance.** A third term that had been applied to Israel in many parts of the Bible, designating the people as peculiarly God's own, come down to him from of old.

Anemone Coronaria, "Lilies of the Field," Palestine.

Ezek. 5:5. **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah.** The prophet has just described three symbols of the destruction of Jerusalem, and these he now proceeds to explain. **This is Jerusalem.** "A city which had done worse than its neighbors, although it was looked upon by its own inhabitants as the center of the world, and although it had had greater opportunities and privileges than they because of its divine institutions." — *Westminster Commentary.* **I have set her in the midst of the nations.** The great nations of the ancient world, Assyria and Babylonia, the Hittites and Syria, Phœnicia and Egypt, formed a circle around Palestine. Literally the Israelites were in the midst of the nations, the hub of the political universe, while spiritually they rose to a commanding position far above them. And it was all a part of the divine providence: "*I* have set her in the midst of the nations." **And countries are round about her.** This urgent saying is now transferred to Christian lands, heirs of the promises to Israel. Ships and railroads, cables and telegraphs, books and newspapers and the post-office, have made us neighbors of all the world. If God laid that heavy responsibility upon Palestine, so poor, so small, and so weak, how much more is it laid upon the Christian nations, so rich, so large, and so strong! We are our brothers' keepers, the keepers of our brother countries. We, even more markedly than Israel of old, are "set in the midst of the nations," and faced with the missionary task.

"Palestine was adapted as no other country to God's great purpose of preparing a pure religion and sending it to all the world. To this end a single nation was selected, trained, and placed in the center of the world so that when the time came to publish the true religion all lands could be reached. Palestine was central and isolated, yet accessible, for when the time came for the apostles to go from Palestine by the Medi-

terranean Sea to the lands round about it, and from there to all other lands, their way was open. There is a piece of marble in a church at Jerusalem which is believed to be at the center of the universe, and the place whence the dust was taken from which Adam was made. Baseless as is this tradition, yet it is true that this land is the center from which has radiated all that is best in life and history." — *Rev. J. P. Macphie.*

A conspicuous illustration of the central position of Palestine is the Plain of Esdraelon east of Mt. Carmel. It was the scene of Deborah's battle with the Canaanites, Gideon's victory over the Midianites, the victory of the Philistines over Saul, the battle between the Egyptians and the Babylonians in which Josiah was slain, the defeat of Jehu by the kings of Israel and Judah. " The Maccabees, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, and Napoleon himself all fought and struggled on this same sacred ground. The author of Revelation called it Armageddon, in token of its many conflicts (Rev. 16 : 16)." — *Rev. William Walter Smith.*

" The Semites have been the great middlemen of the world. Not second-rate in war, they have risen to the first rank in commerce and religion. They have been the carriers between East and West, they have stood between the great ancient civilizations and those which go to make up the modern world ; while by a higher gift, for which their conditions neither in place nor in time fully account, they have been mediary between God and man, and proved the religious teachers of the world, through whom have come its three highest faiths." — *Sir George Adam Smith.*

" The Land of Israel occupies a unique position among the nations of the ancient world. (1) *Its isolation.* It was separated from the west by the Mediterranean Sea ; from the land of Egypt on the south by the great and terrible wilderness of Israel's journeyings ; from the east by the desert of Arabia, and from the north by a rugged wall of mountain which could only be entered through narrow valleys or passageways easily defended against an invading army. (2) *Its central location.* To the inhabitants of Babylonia and Elam it was the *Westland*, toward which a restless tide of immigration and adventure had been tending long before the days of Abraham. To the Egyptians it was the *Midland* region on the way to commerce or conquest amid the rich valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris. To the legions which followed Alexander, and the great generals of Rome, it was the ' high bridge ' on which they ascended and descended respectively into the basin of the Nile or of the Euphrates. While the mountain strongholds of Israel, especially in the center of the land, were seldom disturbed by invading hosts, this highway on its western border was the favorite route for centuries between the three great continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe. This double relation of exclusion and ready intercommunication, paradoxical as it may appear, was a necessary feature in the heritage of a people who were at one period of their history to *dwell apart* from the nations, and at another to carry the message of life and salvation *to all the people of the earth.*" — *Prof. Robert Laird Stewart, D.D.*

## LESSON IV. — October 28.

## SOME MISSIONARY TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHETS. — Isaiah 60 : 1–3 ; Jonah 4 : 10, 11 ; Micah 4 : 1–3 ; Zephaniah 3 : 9.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.*** — Isa. 60 : 3.

**Devotional Reading** : Isa. 42 : 1–9.
**Reference Material** : Isa. 25 : 6–9 ; 32 : 1, 2 ; 49 : 1–6 ; 52 : 13—53 : 12 ; Dan. 2 : 44.
**Primary Topic** : The Story of Jonah.
**Lesson Material** : Jonah, chaps. 3 and 4. Print Jonah 3 : 1–10.
**Memory Verse** : Thou art a gracious God, and merciful. Jonah 4 : 2.
**Junior Topic** : God's Love for All Nations.
**Lesson Material** : Jonah 4 : 10, 11 ; Micah 4 : 1–3 ; Isa. 60 : 1–3 ; Zeph. 3 : 9.
**Memory Verses** : Isa. 60 : 1–3.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : The Prophets as Missionaries.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : The Missionary Message of the Prophets.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will study the story of Jonah, drawing from it the two lessons of God's love and the obedience which we should show to this loving God. The sand map, with a good-sized mirror for the Mediterranean and a lot of little blocks for Nineveh and a toy boat and "great fish," can be used to make the story realistic.

**The Junior Classes** will study the extracts from all four prophets, getting some idea of the work and teachings of each prophet, and especially of that one thought in which they are seen to unite, God's love for all nations. Try to make the boys and girls realize their splendid privilege in helping to carry the knowledge of God's love to all nations of the world.

**The Older Classes** will study the four prophets as specimens of the missionary aspect of all the prophets. Show how the very essence of a prophet's work, his "forth-showing" of God, makes him a missionary. A deeper study of the prophets cannot fail to inspire us with a deeper missionary zeal.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Isaiah's call to be a prophet, B.C. 755; his death, perhaps B.C. 679. Jonah, perhaps B.C. 830. Micah's death, perhaps B.C. 740. Zephaniah, perhaps B.C. 636.

**Place.** — Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem; Jonah, in Nineveh, being a prophet of the Northern Kingdom (Galilee); Micah, in Judah; Zephaniah, in Judah — he was a descendant of Hezekiah, probably the king.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Isaiah's comparison of the true religion to light.
Jonah as a warning.
Jonah as an example.
Micah's comparison of the true religion to a mountain.
Zephaniah's condensation of religion into *word* and *work*.
Other missionary passages in the prophets.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

### SUBJECT: The Missionary Message of the Prophets.

I. The Missionary Message of Isaiah, Isa. 60 : 1–3.
   The gross darkness of heathenism.
   The bright shining of the true light.

II. The Missionary Message of Jonah, Jonah 4 : 10, 11.
   An unwilling missionary.
   An effective message.

III. The Missionary Message of Micah, Micah 4 : 1–3.
   The law of God.
   The peace of God.

IV. The Missionary Message of Zephaniah, Zeph. 3 : 9.
   The pure language of the law.
   The service of the Lord.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Gaussen's *Jonah the Prophet*. Townsend's *The Story of Jonah*. Marshall's *Jonah of Gath-Hepher* (a story). Banks's *Jonah in Fact and Fancy*. Cox's *The Genesis of Evil*. Jordan's *The Song and the Soil*. Stimson's *The New Things of God*. Whiton's *New Points to Old Texts*. Hodges's *The Heresy of Cain*. Jowett's *The Passion for Souls*. Horton's *The Hidden God*. Spurgeon's *Sermons, Sixth Series*.

Isa. 60: 1. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee.

I. **THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE OF ISAIAH**, Isa. 60 : 1–3. We are to study the opening words of one of the greatest of the utterances of the greatest Hebrew prophet. The prophecy includes three chapters, 60, 61, and 62, which form a glorious picture of the ideal City of God, which Isaiah saw rising upon the hills of his beloved Jerusalem. This picture he paints with all the splendors of his matchless imagination and poetic language. It is a vision of the world as it will be when Christian missions have triumphed, and the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

1. **Arise, shine; for thy light is come.** "The image in these strikingly beautiful verses is that of a city glittering in the first rays of the morning sun. Zion is no doubt addressed in the feminine gender, but the personification is much less complete than elsewhere in Isaiah. The light is the light of the promised salvation, so long looked for in vain." — *Prof. John Skinner, D.D.* **And the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee.** Without the gospel of Jesus Christ all nations are prostrate, overwhelmed with misery, weak and wretched beyond any recovery in their own strength. The coming of Christianity is a burst of glory; it means to them all strength, all health, all purity, all joy. It is full daybreak after a stormy night.

2. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

2. **For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth.** Egyptian darkness, darkness of the plagues, lies upon every land that does not know and follow the Light of the World. Byron's famous description of earth in perpetual darkness is a true picture of the horrors of heathenism :

"The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless,
A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropped,
They slept on the abyss without a surge —
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perished; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them — She was the Universe!"

**And gross darkness the peoples.** Africa is called the Dark Continent because comparatively little missionary work has been done there, and most of the continent lies under the shadow of heathenism. But Asia, also, is a Dark Continent, and so is South America, while North America and Europe and Australia have many regions of "gross darkness" even yet. **But Jehovah will arise upon thee.** *Thee* is emphatic in the original: "Upon the heathen nations, deep darkness; upon *thee*, Israel, the rising glory of the Sun of righteousness." **And his glory shall be seen upon thee.** The glory of Israel was the knowledge of God, the pure law of God, the peace and strength and joy which obedience to the law and communion with God brought with them. These are the glory of Christian nations also, so far as their citizens are Christian. Besides, the glory of God in those lands includes also religious freedom, the free press, universal education, free speech, the care of the sick and the aged, honor paid to women, and comfort and prosperity and power such as nations have never before attained.

Holman Hunt.
"I Am the Light of the World."

3. **And nations shall come to thy light.** The best argument our missionaries can use is the goodly measure of light radiated by Christian nations. The more Christians let their light shine, the more will the heathen nations come to the Light of the world. **And kings to the brightness of thy rising.** The Lord, Isaiah has just prophesied, should arise upon Israel like a glorious sun; and now the prophet foresees the rising of Israel also like a bright sun. Even kings, the most resplendent of mortals, will be attracted by the brightness, and will seek it out.

II. **THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE OF JONAH**, Jonah 4:10, 11. Jonah was a prophet of the Northern Kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam II., whose remarkable extension of his kingdom was encouraged by Jonah. Christ referred to Jonah and his escape from the great fish as a type of his own coming resurrection from

Jonah 4: 10. And Jehovah said, Thou hast had regard for the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11. And should not I have regard for Nĭn′-ĕ-vĕh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

the dead. The story of the book of Jonah has profound missionary significance, and is a glorious Old Testament foreglimpse of Paul's opposition to Jewish exclusiveness and opening out God's grace in Christ to the entire Gentile world.

Jonah. Michelangelo.

Jonah was bidden by Jehovah to go to Nineveh, the world's greatest city, proclaiming its immediate destruction by Jehovah. The prophet, in terror, went in just the opposite direction, taking ship for Spain; but a storm came up, the superstitious sailors threw Jonah overboard as the cause of the storm, and after staying for three days and nights in the body of a great fish Jonah was cast up on shore. Having thus learned the lesson of obedience, Jonah went to Nineveh, preached there boldly, and so aroused the people that they all repented in sackcloth and ashes.

Then was Jonah angry with God, and rebuked Jehovah for changing his mind. Going out of the city, he made a rough shelter and sat there waiting to see whether God would really destroy Nineveh within the forty days of his prophecy, or not. To protect the prophet against the fierce heat of the sun the Lord caused a quick-growing gourd to spring up, and Jonah was exceedingly glad of the shade. But the Lord also sent a worm to eat the stalk of the gourd, so that the plant withered away. Then also the Lord sent an especially hot and sultry wind, so that the prophet, in his despair, prayed for death.

The wonderful book closes with a dialogue between Jehovah and Jonah:

*Jehovah:* Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?

*Jonah:* I do well to be angry, even unto death.

10. **And Jehovah said, Thou hast had regard for the gourd.** Jonah's pity was one-tenth for the gourd and nine-tenths for himself, but the Lord takes him on his own ground and ascribes all the prophet's grief to tenderness for the plant. **For which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow.** The contrast with Jehovah is implied: should he not have tender compassion for *men*, if Jonah was so mindful of a *plant?* "In all things that exist God has the deepest interest. He planned them, he made them, he sustained them, he rules them, he cares for them. His tender mercies are over all his works." — *Bishop Perowne.*

*Illustration.* "Picture to yourself a poor traveller who had fallen ill in Africa, and who received while sick a letter from his father at home. Would it not do him a great deal of good? Now picture to yourself what Jonah must have felt when he beheld this token of God's fatherly goodness." — *Professor Gaussen.*

**Which came up in a night, and perished in a night.** Literally, "the son of a night" — while men are the children of eternity!

11. **And should not I have regard for Nineveh.** There is a strong contrast: *thou* . . . and *I*. What is any man, to set his judgment against the Almighty's? **That great city.** Nineveh is said to have been sixty miles in circuit. **Wherein are more**

MICAH 4: 1. But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it.

**than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand.** That is, "children under two years old. As such commonly form but one-tenth of a population, we suppose Nineveh to contain 1,200,000 people." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* **And also much cattle?** The vast space within the walls of Nineveh included much pasturage for cattle. God cares even for the dumb beasts, as well as for the little children. The ground of his compassion is not the repentance of the Ninevites, which Jonah should have remembered, and which was of course the reason why God could forgive them; but quite aside from that, the heavenly Father is shown to be brooding like a mother over the mere helplessness of his creatures, eager to help them where they cannot help themselves. Out of this tender mercy came Christ, and out of it come Christian missions. The very soul of the missionary enterprise — warning, to be sure, but above all love — is in this book of the prophet Jonah. "It may be partly due to this little story that the Hebrew religion became a suitable foundation upon which Jesus built the Christian Church." — *Edgar James Banks, Ph.D.*

The book ends abruptly with this divine question. "What could follow such an appeal so fitly as the dumb silence of a humbled heart?" — *J. M. Whiton.*

"If we are to give attention to any animals in the book of Jonah, we will do well to leave the fish and take the cattle. To be tender-hearted ought to be one of the characteristics of the Christian. To make this world a better and happier world to live in for all the men and all the women and all the children and all the living creatures that are in it, is the mission of religion in which we ought to be missionaries." — *Dean George Hodges.*

"The book of Jonah shows a comprehension of the character and the purpose of God so far in advance of the time, so splendidly anticipatory of the gospel of Christ, that it challenges our wonder and admiration to-day. It is the old truth that we are all so slow to believe, that not only is God able to save to the uttermost, but that all men are brethren, and all are alike in need of the common redemption." — *Rev. Henry A. Stimson, D.D.*

III. **THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE OF MICAH**, Mic. 4: 1–3. Micah was a prophet of Judah, and prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He was contemporary with Hosea and Isaiah, but was younger than they. One of his prophecies led to the repentance of King Hezekiah, and another foretold that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem. Micah was a fearless preacher of righteousness, condemning sin, denouncing idolatry, and pointing the finger of scorn at the oppressors of the poor.

1. **But in the latter days it shall come to pass.** Micah has been prophesying the punishment that will befall his country because of its sins; but in the future he sees a fairer prospect. Mic. 4: 1–3 is almost exactly the same as Isa. 2: 2–4, which we studied last week. "It was an oracle which brought the contemporary teachers of the age, Micah and Isaiah, into close harmony. Looking at events from different angles, here was one thing which they saw exactly alike. We know not which quotes the other, or whether both quoted a third, nor do we need to know." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* **That the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains.** Micah has been prophesying (Mic. 3: 12) that the temple hill in Jerusalem should be just such a wilderness thicket as it was when Abraham offered Isaac there. Now he sets off against that doleful vision a prophecy of the exaltation of Mount Zion far above all other mountains. **And it shall be exalted above the hills.** That is, the worship of Jehovah shall be honored above all worship of heathen gods. "Oh, that you and I might have the vision! The vision comes as the heart is pure, the mountain of the Lord's house rising to heaven, the Saviour of men forgiving because he has redeemed." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "I think of Durham city (England) as an emblem of the prophet's thought. Away in the lower reaches of the city there is the river, on which boats are plying for pleasure and recreation. A little higher up on the slopes are the places of business, the ways and byways of trade. A little higher there is the castle hill, on which the turreted tower presents its imposing front; but on a higher summit, commanding all and overlooking all, there rises and towers aloft the majesty of the

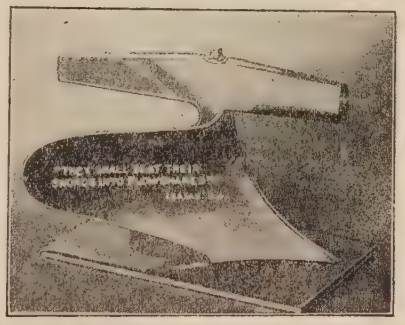
2. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem;

3. And he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

glorious old cathedral. The river is typical of pleasure, the ways of business are representative of money, the castle is the symbol of armaments, the cathedral is significant of God. In the latter days the spiritual is to have emphasis above pleasure, money, armaments." — *Rev. J. H. Jowett.*

**And peoples shall flow unto it.** The Hebrew suggests that the heathen will rush toward Mount Zion like a mighty river, like the flood of the Nile. During recent years there have been many such turnings to God in heathen lands, like the mass movement in India which has swept entire villages, over and over, into Christianity. "As for Mohammed, has he not become now effete with grey old age? As for the religion of Confucius or of Buddha, where are their missionaries, where the old activity that made minor idolatries bow before them? They are now content to be confined within their own limit, they feel that their hour is come." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

2. **And many nations shall go and say.** The nations are personified, and supposed to be talking together, urging each other on the way to Zion. **Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah.** Every missionary triumph in one land is sure to inspire the missionaries and native Christians in other lands, for the missionaries are no longer isolated, but form a world-wide army. **And to the house of the God of Jacob.** The temple of Solomon is meant, but that perished long ago. The spiritual temple, however, still remains, the true religion which has its tabernacle in every Christian heart. **And he will teach us of his ways.** The ways in which he walks and would have us walk with him. Compare Christ's saying, "I am the way." **And we will walk in his paths.** They had been walking in the paths of sin, and had found there nothing but sorrow and ruin. **For out of Zion shall go forth the law.** The Hebrew word does not mean the authoritative Mosaic law, but the less formal instructions given from time to time. **And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.** By every proof that could be devised or required, and especially by its workings in history and its appeal to the consciences of men, the body of laws set forth in the Hebrew Bible and there called the word of Jehovah has been shown to be of God in a sense true of no other set of laws the world has known.



"They Shall Beat Their Swords into Plowshares."

3. **And he will judge between many peoples.** The true religion is national and international law as well as personal law. The broadest and most important of human affairs come within its scope. **And will decide concerning strong nations afar off.** They are strong nations, but Jehovah is stronger than they. They are distant nations, but Jehovah can reach farther than they. **And they shall beat their swords into plowshares.** "The reading 'plowshares' is doubtful, but some agricultural implement is certainly meant; weapons of war will be converted into tools of peaceful industry." — *Prof. J. M. Powis Smith.* **And their spears into pruning-hooks.** The reversed process was employed toward the end of the World War, the Central Powers using the metal of many useful tools for fabricating engines of destruction. In Messiah's day all such folly will be ended. **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation.** "The name of the Messiah is the Prince of Peace, and we still look into the dim future, out of a present life rife with wars and rumors of wars, for the full realization of his reign of peace. And we are sure that the time will

ZEPH. 3:9. For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent.

come, for 'the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.'" — *Ellicott.* **Neither shall they learn war any more.** In our country we cannot realize how large a part of the time of every able-bodied young man, in most lands, is occupied by compulsory training for possible wars. It is an enormous drain on natural resources, and for the individual a sad waste of energy and time, a fearful interruption of the normal course of life.

"The highest religion will be, in the best sense, attractive; it cannot be kept in any 'holy city,' men will come for it and carry it off. In this sense was the religion of Old Testament times missionary, that there grew up in Israel a great gift of God which, 'shining more and more unto the perfect day,' could not be confined by limitations of place or nationality, and without formal propaganda forced its way out into the life of the world." — *Prof. W. G. Jordan, D.D.*

IV. **THE MESSAGE OF ZEPHANIAH**, Zeph. 3:9. Zephaniah was of royal blood, the great-great-grandson of the famous and godly King Hezekiah. He prophesied at the time of Jeremiah, in the reign of King Josiah, of the Southern Kingdom, and he probably prophesied before Josiah carried out his reforms. His book is a powerful protest against the idolatry and other iniquities of Judah. It announces the doom of other nations, and promises that his own nation shall finally be restored to God's favor and thus brought back to prosperity.

Raphael.
St. Michael Slaying the Dragon.

9. **For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language.** "Then" refers to the wholesale destruction of wicked peoples which Zephaniah has been prophesying. "Language" is literally "lip." The lips of the people have been impure because of their sins and because they have taken upon them the names of false gods. Prof. A. B. Davidson understands this sentence to be a promise that God will turn the impure lips of the people into pure lips. Impurity of speech and of life characterizes all heathen religions, and purity is one of the first effects of conversion to Christianity. **That they may all call upon the name of Jehovah.** Using their purified lips to worship the true God. **To serve him with one consent.** Literally, with one *back*, or one *shoulder*, all coming under the one yoke, pulling together like faithful oxen in the service of Jehovah. In place of the strife and warfare, the suspicion and enmity of their heathenism, when the nations enter the happy family of Jehovah they will enjoy peace and good will and profitable coöperation. The nations have not yet risen to the full height of this conception, but as they become truly Christian they develop the spirit of the prophecy step by step.

"The true motive, the high motive for missionary service is, that God, who is saving you, desires and intends the salvation of the whole world; that he pours out the indignation of his wrath on the evils which corrupt and degrade men only that he may create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within them; that he 'consumes' only that he may redeem the nations and the kingdoms. Let this picture hang in the study of your imagination, then, as an incentive to zeal in every good word and work, — the picture of a world searched through and through by purifying fire in order that God may turn to the nations a pure lip, that they may all invoke his name, and serve him as with one shoulder. If that will not at once reconcile you to the mercy of his judgments and stimulate your zeal in his service, I know not what will." — *Samuel Cox.*

## LESSON V. — November 4.

## WORLD-WIDE PROHIBITION — WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY. — Psalm 101 : 1–8; Proverbs 23 : 29–35.

**PRINT Ps. 101 : 5–8; Prov. 23 : 29–35.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *I will set no base thing before mine eyes.* — Ps. 101 : 3.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 63 : 1–7.
**Primary Topic** : TAKING CARE OF OUR BODIES.
**Lesson Material** : Prov. 23 : 29–35.
**Memory Verse** : At the last it biteth like a serpent. Prov. 23 : 32.
**Junior Topic** : THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL.
**Lesson Material** : Prov. 23 : 29–35.
**Memory Verses** : Prov. 23 : 31, 32.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : PROGRESS OF PROHIBITION AT HOME AND ABROAD.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : THE FIGHT AGAINST LAWLESSNESS.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** may not know much about drunkenness, but the verses in Proverbs, showing how some men abuse the wonderful bodies God has given them, will lead naturally to a lesson on the care of their bodies and the preservation of their health, with many needed instructions regarding sleep, food, bathing, clothing, fresh air, and exercise.

**The Junior Classes** will be told of the harm that alcohol does to the body; for, even though ours is a prohibition country, we need to teach temperance still in order that it may remain a prohibition country.

**The Older Classes** will extend their lesson from the personal view of the Proverbs passage to the large, statesmanlike view of the passage from the Psalms, and will discuss the national and international aspects of the temperance question, remembering that this is World's Temperance Sunday.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — David was born (Beecher) B.C. 1092, became king of all Israel B.C. 1055, and died B.C. 1022, when Solomon came to the throne. Solomon died B.C. 983.

**Place.** — David and Solomon reigned in Jerusalem, there writing most of their psalms and proverbs.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Temperance in the Psalms.
Temperance in Proverbs.
Temperance gleanings from current newspapers.
Recent temperance laws.
The enforcement of prohibition.
The gains from prohibition.
The spread of prohibition over the world.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Progress of Prohibition at Home and Abroad.**

I. THE RUIN WROUGHT BY ALCOHOL, Prov. 23 : 29–35.
- Physical ruin.
- Spiritual ruin.
- Social ruin.

II. PUTTING AN END TO THE SALOON, Ps. 101 : 1–8.
- Hatred of evil.
- Cutting off iniquity.
- Triumphs of prohibition.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*Commentaries on Proverbs* by Tov (*International Critical Commentary*), Horton (*Expositor's Bible*), Martin (*New Century Bible*), Perowne (*Cambridge Bible*), Maclaren (*Expositions*), etc. Prothero's *The Psalms in Human Life*. Barton's *The Psalms and Their Story*. Dyer's *Psalm Mosaics*. Rotherham's *Studies in the Psalms*. Spurgeon's *The Treasury of David*. Other works on the Psalms, by Perowne, Thrupp, Delitzsch, Maclaren, F. B. Meyer, Davies, Kirkpatrick, Briggs, etc. *Alcohol and the Human Body*, by Horsley and Sturge. Crooker's *Shall I Drink?* Milner's *Lincoln and Liquor*. *The Scientific Temperance Journal*. *The National Advocate*. *The National Enquirer*. *The American Issue*. *The Union Signal*. *The Alliance News* (London). *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book*.

I. **THE RUIN WROUGHT BY ALCOHOL**, Prov. 23 : 29–35. These verses constitute a little poem, placed among the couplets or quatrains of the book of Proverbs. "This vivid picture of the effects of drunkenness leaves its sinfulness and its wider consequences out of sight, and fixes attention on the sorry spectacle which

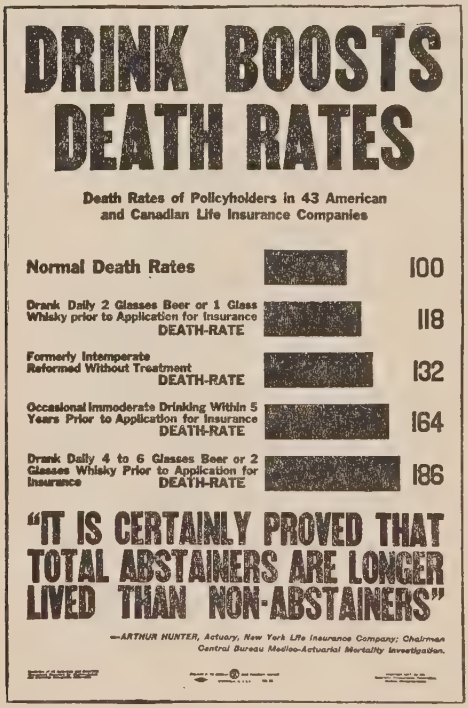
PROV. 23: 29. Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30. They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek out mixed wine.

a man makes of himself in body and mind when he 'puts an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains.' Disgust and ridicule are both expressed. The writer would warn his 'son' by impressing the ugliness and ludicrousness of drunkenness. The argument is legitimate, though not the highest." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

The title of this book, "The Proverbs of Solomon," "does not refer to actual personal authorship, but names a species and type of literature of which Solomon was the originator and inspirer — as if it meant to say 'the Solomonic proverbs.'" — *Prof. J. F. Genung.* The book is a compilation of the work of centuries, and it is not known just what portions were written by the wise king.

29. **Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?** Professor Toy translates this, "Who cries 'woe'? who 'alas'?" "Who is it whose constant and appropriate language is the piteous cry of pain, the agonized exclamation of remorse?" — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.* "The sharp touch of the satirist reproduces the actual inarticulate utterances of drunkenness." — *Speaker's Commentary.* **Who hath contentions? who hath complaining?** Drinking makes a man quarrelsome; at another stage the drunkard is querulous, finding fault in a maudlin way with all men and with his fate in general. A fit of silly blubbering often follows. **Who hath wounds without cause?** "Wounds which might have been avoided, the result of quarrels in which a sober man would never have engaged." — *Pulpit Commentary.* When he "sobers off" and looks at his bruised body, the drunkard cannot remember how he came by his wounds. **Who hath redness of eyes?** The dull, inflamed, bleary eyes of a drinking man are sadly familiar — or were before the advent of prohibition. All delicate operations are rendered impossible by the use of alcohol. Sir Victor Horsley, the eminent British surgeon, writes in describing the diseases produced by alcohol: "The sensory derangements involve also the special senses, especially that of sight. Illusions of this sense are frequent. Acuteness of vision is also weakened; the use of the eyes becomes fatiguing, and objects become confused."


DRINK BOOSTS DEATH RATES
Death Rates of Policyholders in 43 American and Canadian Life Insurance Companies
Normal Death Rates
100
Drank Daily 2 Glasses Beer or 1 Glass Whisky prior to Application for Insurance DEATH-RATE
118
Formerly Intemperate Reformed Without Treatment DEATH-RATE
132
Occasional Immoderate Drinking Within 5 Years Prior to Application for Insurance DEATH-RATE
164
Drank Daily 4 to 6 Glasses Beer or 2 Glasses Whisky Prior to Application for Insurance DEATH-RATE
186
"IT IS CERTAINLY PROVED THAT TOTAL ABSTAINERS ARE LONGER LIVED THAN NON-ABSTAINERS"
—ARTHUR HUNTER, Actuary, New York Life Insurance Company; Chairman Central Bureau Medico-Actuarial Mortality Investigation.

By permission of Scientific Temperance Federation.

30. **They that tarry long at the wine.** Rising early, as Isaiah says (Isa. 5: 11), in their eagerness for strong drink, and sitting up late at night in their carousing. **They that go to seek out mixed wine.** "Seek out" is "literally 'test,' the probable reference being to the connoisseur, the man who prides himself in being well versed in brands of liquor." — *Prof. G. Currie Martin.* It is a silly pride — sampling poisons! "How 'mixed wine' (literally, simply 'mixture') was prepared is not known, perhaps by adding spices." — *International Critical Commentary.*

31. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly:

32. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

33. Thine eyes shall behold strange things, and thy heart shall utter perverse things.

34. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35. They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not hurt; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

---

31. **Look not thou upon the wine when it is red.** " Be not attracted by its beautiful appearance. The wine of Palestine was chiefly ' red,' though what we call white wine was not unknown." — *Pulpit Commentary.* " ' Look not ' is safe policy in regard to many of the snares for young lives that abound in our modern society. It is not at all needful to ' see life,' or to know the secrets of wickedness, in order to be wise and good. ' Simple concerning evil ' is a happier state than to have eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Many a young man has been ruined, body and soul, by a prurient curiosity to know what sort of life dissipated men and women lead, or what sort of books they were against which he was warned, or what kind of place a theatre was, and so on. Eyes are greedy, and there is a very quick telephone from them to the desires. Whether the writer of this stern picture of a drunkard was a total abstainer or not, the spirit of his counsel not to ' look on the wine ' is in full accord with the practice. It is very clear that if a man is a total abstainer, he can never be a drunkard." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **When it sparkleth in the cup.** Literally, " when it gives its eye in the cup," as if the light reflections from the dangerous liquid came from an alluring, demonic eye. " The beaded bubbles winking on the surface." — *Maclaren.* **When it goeth down smoothly.** Literally, " it goes *straight*," easily gliding over the lips and palate and down the throat. " We can never tell where the pleasantness melts into a dangerous fascination, where the color and the sparkle and the agreeable tingle which make it pass so easily down the throat have become the lure and the spell of a poisonous reptile." — *Expositor's Bible.* The pleasure of wine is the bait of a deadly trap.

32. **At the last it biteth like a serpent.** The word " serpent " in the original means any of the larger snakes. Palestine and Syria have twenty-five species of serpent, four of them deadly poisonous and five somewhat poisonous. " At the last " points the awful contrast between the pleasurable beginning of the drunkard's life and its horrible conclusion. **And stingeth like an adder.** It is not known what kind of snake is meant by the Hebrew word translated " adder," but it was evidently a poisonous variety.

33. **Thine eyes shall behold strange things.** The fantastic visions of a drunkard, the terrible fancies of the victim of delirium tremens. " Strange things " in the Hebrew is merely the adjective " strange," and it is in feminine plural, giving good reason for the Authorized Version, " strange women," which appears also in the margin of the Revised Version. Drunkenness leads to licentiousness, and houses of ill fame abound where saloons abound. **And thy heart shall utter perverse things.** Irresponsible things, ludicrous sentences. Not only the drunkard's eyes see wild visions, but his speech also is let loose so that it wanders insanely.

34. **Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea.** " As if it were a safe resting-place. A strong figure to denote the utter recklessness of danger which excess of drink induces." — *Cambridge Bible.* **Or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.** " Of a mast " is one word in the Hebrew, a word found only here in the Old Testament, and its meaning is unknown, " mast " being a mere conjecture. However, some precarious position is evidently described. Drunkenness leads a man into silly perils ; and in srite of the proverb that Providence takes care of " children, drunken men, and fools," he does not by any means always escape.

35. **They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not hurt.** " Shalt thou say " is not in the Hebrew ; the words are inserted to show that the sentence is part of the drunkard's soliloquy on awaking from his sodden slumber. He finds his face smeared with blood, his clothes torn, his pockets empty, his body stiff with bruises. " Thieves

Ps. 101:5. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I destroy: him that hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer.

and ruffians must have beaten me insensible," the sot mutters; "strange that I did not know it!" **They have beaten me, and I felt it not.** "They" have brought him to his wretched state; the drunkard blames every one but himself, yet he alone is responsible. **When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.** "'When shall I awake?' he mutters, as the swimming sensation in the head, and the unsteady stagger in his steps, remind him that he is not quite himself." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* Alcohol is a habit-forming drug. It creates an overpowering appetite for itself. "Intoxication is not increase of life, but putting the reins into the hands of the animal within us. Liquor changes the character by paralyzing the best and highest in us. It puts the real man to sleep. He is not there. It is more than merely a life-destroyer, for it destroys the higher life and puts the spirit in subjection to what is brutish." — *Joseph Henry Crooker.*

*Thorough-going Mohammedans.* "The Mohammedans of Bombay, India, are conducting a unique 'dry campaign.' The Koran forbids Mohammedans to use strong drink, but many of them are violating this law. These reformers are picketing the principal saloons of that city, and every Mohammedan who comes out of them is seized and led through the streets with cries of 'Shame!' A man belonging to the 'sweeper' caste was found drunk. His caste fellows seized him, garlanded him with old shoes, and marched him through the bazaars of the city with the beating of empty oil tins. Several castes have adopted resolutions forbidding their members to touch liquor upon the penalty of ostracism. The movement is spreading to other cities." — *The National Advocate.*

II. **PUTTING AN END TO THE SALOON,** Ps. 101:1–8. This psalm is associated with David's conquest of Jerusalem, making it his capital, and bringing thither the Ark of God. "This psalm has been called 'A Mirror for Kings.' It is a prince's psalm, — the song of a righteous ruler seeking to make his state a fit abiding-place for Jehovah. It couples appreciation of righteousness with an abhorrence of sin. As one who will be fit to dwell with God, he will set no wicked thing before his own eyes; and as ruler of the nation, and keeper of a household, he will not harbor or encourage the evil. God's presence implies purity; and to this end he will seek out of the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with him. A sense of God's presence is the true basis of Civil Service Reform." — *Rev. William E. Barton, D.D.*

In Great Britain "this Psalm is used in the Service for the King's Accession. No more suitable words could be chosen to be sung at a royal coronation, and repeated on its anniversaries. Ernest the Pious, Duke of Saxe Gotha, sent an unfaithful minister a copy of Psalm 101, and it became a proverb in the country, when an official had done anything wrong, 'He will certainly soon receive the Prince's Psalm to read.' The psalm was beloved by the noblest of Russian princes, Vladimir Monomachor; and by the gentlest of English reformers, Nicholas Ridley." — *Rev. A. S. Dyer.*

The psalm is divided into two parts, verses 1–4 and verses 5–8. The first part is personal, the second national. In the first David speaks as a private citizen, in the second as a king. In the first he seeks heart purity, in the second the purity of the state. The first is a preparation for the second. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" must precede "I will destroy all the wicked of the land." The temperance reform has succeeded and is succeeding because it has been fostered by noble men and women, pure of heart and life, desiring above all things to honor God and serve mankind.

5. **Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I destroy.** "David had suffered too much from slanderers in the court of Saul to think of trusting them now, even though they might fawn upon him." — *Joseph Bryant Rotherham.* We must remember that he is speaking as a king and not as a private citizen. This verse is no warrant for a man's taking the law into his own hands. "It is probably not meant that the slanderer will be put to death, but only that he will be banished, at any rate from the court, and, so far as possible, put down." — *Rawlinson.* **Him that hath a high look** (literally, "lofty-eyed") **and a proud heart** (literally, "broad of heart") **will I not suffer.** More literally, "I cannot endure." In Prov. 21:4 "a high look and a proud heart" are again joined together and branded as "sin."

6. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall minister unto me.

7. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes.

8. Morning by morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land; to cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah.

6. **Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land.** "The Hebrew word 'faithful' implies that faithfulness to God is the basis of such fidelity to the king." — *Bishop Perowne.* The eyes of the king are upon all such, selecting them for favor and advancement. **That they may dwell with me.** Thus God, the King of kings, sent his Son to tell his children of the beautiful place prepared for them (John 14 : 2, 3), that they may be with him forever (John 17 : 24). **He that walketh in a perfect way.** David requires of himself "a perfect heart" (v. 2), and he will require no less of his officers and servants. **He shall minister unto me.** "The Hebrew verb is the technical one for taking part in religious worship." — *New Century Bible.* The pure in heart shall see God, shall stand before his throne, shall be his trusted servants.

7. **He that worketh** ("practises") **deceit shall not dwell within my house.** Lord Bacon bade George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, take this psalm for his guide in promoting courtiers, and especially quoted this verse (see Prothero, *The Psalms in Human Life*). **He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes.** "Shall not keep his position in my court, but be banished from it. Lying is one of the sins which the psalmists denounce most frequently." — *Pulpit Commentary.*

WHY AMERICA WENT DRY
DIFFERENT DRINKS
But the
SAME AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL
1 PINT WINE
2 Pints Beer
4% Alcohol
All fermented drinks, such as cider, wine, and beer, as well as whisky contain alcohol.
ALCOHOL is DANGEROUS WHATEVER ITS FORM
"We have three great habit-forming curses---cocain, morphin, alcohol."
—Bulletin of New York City Board of Health
Alcohol is a Habit-Forming Drug

By permission of Scientific Temperance Federation.

8. **Morning by morning.** "One after the other, searching for them." — *International Critical Commentary.* **Will I destroy all the wicked of the land.** "Every morning the work has to be done again. 'Ill weeds grow apace,' and the mower must not get weary of his scythe." — *Expositor's Bible.* "Day by day the king will hold his court of justice in the morning, that he may purge Jerusalem of evil and make it a holy city, worthy of its high title, 'the city of Jehovah.'" — *Cambridge Bible.* "Fast as the evil springs under shelter of the darkness, it shall be destroyed with the returning light. The allusion is, doubtless, to the Oriental custom of holding courts of law in the early morning. It is like the dream which fascinated the Roman poet, of an *Astræa redux.* It is a hope which finds its accomplishment in the Apocalyptic vision, in that new Jerusalem into which 'there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie' (Rev. 21 : 27)." — *Bishop Perowne.* **To cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah,** that is, Jerusalem. "We may well ask ourselves whether this is a true picture of the inner realm of the heart, and whether we are strict and merciless in not permitting traitors there. We do not now use the sword of extermination for men; but we should use it for evil principles and habits, and unholy things." — *F. B. Meyer.*

THE SALOON EXILED. Whiskey men, in the newspapers and in widely used plac-

ards, are continually slandering Abraham Lincoln by asserting that he was a drinker, a liquor-seller, and opposed to prohibition. They quote alleged sentences from Lincoln that cannot be found in any of his writings or speeches. On the contrary, Dr. Milner has shown " by detailed documentary evidence that in an age when liquor drinking and selling were the rule, Lincoln was a life-long abstainer ; his first literary composition was an essay on temperance ; he joined a total-abstinence society in order to help others ; his first great speech on Washington's birthday in 1842 was in behalf of total abstinence and the reform of drunkards ; and his first public identification with a great moral question was his work for temperance reform. He was himself a heavy sufferer from drink, for he staggered for fifteen years under the load of debt which a drunken business partner threw upon him and which he felt in honor bound to pay. His personal influence was often exercised in helping the youth to sobriety, as, for example, the little-known incident of his seeing a very young Western recruit going into a saloon in Washington, putting a kindly hand on the boy's shoulder, and saying, ' I don't like to see our uniform going into these places.' To quote the boy's own words, ' After that we would not have gone into a saloon for all the wealth of the city. It was a means of salvation to me. To-day (1909) I hate the saloon, and have hated it ever since I heard those words from that great man.' He was in full sympathy with the orders abolishing the rum ration in the army and navy and all other means by which the ' boys of '61 ' might be kept from drink. He signed the revenue measure for taxing liquors with the greatest reluctance and upon the assurance that it was necessary as a temporary war measure and would be repealed. Major Merwin is authority for the statement that on the very day of his death he said that as soon as reconstruction was accomplished he would throw all his great power into the contest to overthrow the legalized liquor traffic." — *The Scientific Temperance Journal.*

The following are some of the social effects of prohibition in the city of Boston, Mass. They are typical of the results everywhere. The arrests in Boston the year before prohibition, 1919, were 88,593 ; the first year of prohibition, 1920, they were 47,395. The arrests for drunkenness in 1919 were 52,682 — more than the arrests for all causes under prohibition ; in 1920 the arrests for drunkenness were only 16,487. Comparing the same two years, the arrests for murder fell from 30 to 18 ; for murderous assault from 96 to 56 ; for manslaughter from 99 to 63 ; for robbery from 243 to 101. The deaths from alcoholism fell off from 110 to 24 ; from accidents from 703 to 483 ; from suicide from 122 to 98. The number of delinquent children fell from 3,587 to 2,524 ; the number of truants fell markedly, and the children in the schools were reported better clothed and better nourished. Taking the entire State of Massachusetts and comparing 1919 with 1920, the arrests for drunkenness fell from 77,925 to 32,580, and the prison population fell from 3,173 to 2,278. Similar reports come from all sections of the country.

The policy of prohibition was not forced upon the American people, but was the result of a century of discussion and the climax of a long and slow growth of temperance sentiment. This is shown by the fact that before the advent of national prohibition on January 17, 1920, the population living under prohibition was 62,663,652 or 68.3 per cent of the whole, while only 31.7 per cent, or 29,208,614 persons were living under license. A still more striking fact is that 2,835,367 square miles of the United States, or 95.4 per cent, was under prohibition before national prohibition came in, while the " wet " territory comprised only 138,523 square miles, or 4.6 per cent.

After prohibition in the United States had been in operation more than a year, the Manchester (England) Chamber of Commerce wrote to the British Empire Chamber of Commerce in the United States and asked its views upon the workings of prohibition in this country. The Chamber answered : " From all the great manufacturing companies come reports of increased efficiency ; absenteeism is notably lessened, time-workers work longer, and there is more thrift and steadiness. There are fewer accidents and a better working ' atmosphere.' A striking effect is found in the orderly conduct of recent strikes and in the more peaceable settlement of disputes between employers and labor unions." The report goes on to speak of the increased use of savings-banks by workers, increased patronage of retail establishments by them, and other improvements. Though the times were hard and there was much unemployment, charitable soup houses and bread lines were little in demand.

The economic advantages of prohibition are turning the thought of the nations toward the policy as a means of promoting prosperity, but the overwhelming reason for prohibition is the spiritual reason. Alcohol destroys soul as well as body, it cheats

its victims of heaven as well as of earth. Prohibition is therefore not only a gain for time but a gain for eternity. As the Eighteenth Amendment is enforced more and more perfectly, it will produce a race of physical, mental, and spiritual giants, strong and happy as no people in the world's history has ever been. To that end let us all work and pray.

## LESSON VI. — November 11.

## SOME MISSIONARY TEACHINGS OF THE PSALMS. — Psalm 47 : 1–9; 67 : 1–7; 100 : 1–5.

**PRINT Ps. 67 : 1–7.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee.* — Ps. 67 : 3.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 98 : 1–9.
**Reference Material** : Psalms 96—99 ; 117 ; Rev. 5 : 8–14.
**Primary Topic** : EVERYBODY PRAISING GOD.
**Lesson Material** : Ps. 67 : 1–7.
**Story Material** : Matt. 21 : 1–16.
**Memory Verse** : Serve Jehovah with gladness ; Come before his presence with singing. Ps. 100 : 2.
**Junior Topic** : EVERYBODY SERVING GOD.
**Lesson Material** : Ps. 67 : 1–7.
**Memory Verses** : Isa. 56 : 6, 7.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : ALL NATIONS CALLED TO SERVE JEHOVAH.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : MISSIONARY HYMNS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** use only Psalm 67, and take for their central theme the praise and service that belong to God. The youngest can sing his praise and do what he wishes them to do — and that is all that the oldest can do. Get the Juniors to commit the entire psalm to memory.

**The Older Classes** will study the missionary aspects of the three psalms selected, and of as many other psalms as possible. Especially emphasize the world-wide appeal of the Bible, which began in the Old Testament and had its culmination in the New Testament. Show how necessary to a true Christian is this love for all the world.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The defeat of Sennacherib, which may have suggested Psalm 47 and Psalm 67, took place (Beecher) B.C. 701. (The victory of Jehoshaphat took place B.C. 903.) The building of the second temple, after which Psalm 100 may have been written, was begun B.C. 537 and finished B.C. 516.

**Place.** — Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Missionary teachings of our three psalms.
Other missionary psalms.
Why Israel was central in the Jewish thought of a world kingdom.
The way in which Christianity fulfils the missionary hopes of the Psalms.
The reason for the universal appeal of the Psalms.
How came the Psalms by their missionary ideals?

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : All Nations Called to Serve Jehovah.**

I. A PSALM OF GOD'S POWER, Ps. 47 : 1–9.
He subdues the nations.
He is King of all the earth.

II. A PSALM OF GOD'S GUIDANCE, Ps. 67 : 1–7.
His way of mercy and justice.
His salvation for all nations.

III. A PSALM OF GOD'S GOODNESS, Ps. 100 : 1–5.
A joyful noise from all lands.
God's loving-kindness endures forever.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Horton's *The Bible as a Missionary Book*, Chap. VI. Books on the Psalms named in the last lesson. Matheson's *Messages of Hope*. Watkinson's *The Education of the Heart*.

Ps. 67: 1. God be merciful unto us, and bless us, *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Sē'-lăh.

I. **A PSALM OF GOD'S POWER**, Ps. 47 : 1–9. "In Psalms 46, 47, 48 we have a trilogy of victory. The general character of the event is so plainly reflected as to need no pointing out. The songs may well have been written by the great prophet Isaiah, and are worthy of his loftiest inspiration." — *Rev. William E. Barton, D.D.* It is suggested that the occasion was the deliverance of Judah in King Hezekiah's time from the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib. Others think that the psalm was written to commemorate the similar deliverance granted to King Jehoshaphat.

"This is rightly regarded as a Messianic psalm, inasmuch as it looks forward to the submission of all the nations of the world to Jehovah as their King; and it has naturally, on account of verse 5, 'God is gone up with a shout,' etc., been used from ancient times as a special psalm for Ascension Day. Not that verse 5 is a prophecy of the ascension; the context makes it plain that it cannot be so regarded. But the words originally spoken of Jehovah's return to his throne in heaven (as we speak) after his triumph over the deadly enemies of his people, may be legitimately applied to the return of Christ to heaven after his triumph over sin and death, to take his seat upon his throne of light and glory at the right hand of God. It is the New Year's psalm of the synagogue, recited seven times previous to the blowing of the trumpets, which marked that festival (Num. 29 : 1)." — *Cambridge Bible.*

The psalm consists of three stanzas or strophes. The first is addressed to all the nations of earth, and these are kept in view throughout the psalm. They are bidden to praise Jehovah, because he is a terrible conqueror, subduing all peoples and placing them under his own chosen people, Israel. The second stanza repeats the summons to praise God in view of the recent great victory, to accomplish which God had come down from heaven (Isa. 31 : 4), and now he has returned to heaven (verse 5) in triumph. The third stanza pictures all the hitherto sundered nations of the world brought together into one people, become "the people of the God of Abraham," adopted into all the privileges and joys of Israel. This is exactly what is coming to pass through the expanding and successful missionary activities of Christianity.

II. **A PSALM OF GOD'S GUIDANCE**, Ps. 67 : 1–7. Dr. William E. Barton assigns this psalm to the same time as the preceding, the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib during the reign of Hezekiah. Of this series of psalms of deliverance this psalm, he says, "is the grand finale. In this deliverance the nations about have shared; they are now called upon to praise God. God rules not Israel alone, but all the ends of the earth. This is a perfect gem of sacred song. There is not in the Psalter a more lovely exhibition of love to all nations. There is here a foregleam of the spirit of Paul: 'Is he the God of the Jew only? Is he not also the God of the Gentile?' Here is the broadening of the Jewish spirit through this common deliverance; many from the east and west sit in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

"This is, in the highest and most spiritual sense, a Messianic psalm; not indeed, strictly speaking, predictive, but expressing hopes and anticipations completely fulfilled by the manifestation of God in Christ." — *Speaker's Commentary.*

1. **God be merciful unto us, and bless us.** The psalmist uses, with changes, the high-priestly blessing of Num. 6 : 24–26. "God forgives, then he gives; till he be merciful to pardon our sins through Christ, he cannot bless or look kindly on us sinners. All our enjoyments are but blessings in bullion till gospel grace and pardoning mercy stamp and make them current." — *William Gurnall.* **And cause his face to shine upon us.** Throughout the psalms God is often spoken of as a sun, and his loving favor is compared to the sunshine. Without him all our life is as a cloudy, gloomy day; but when he comes the clouds break and all the earth is flooded with glory. "Shine into my heart, thou better Sun! It is rather on my heart than on my garden I need thy shining." — *George Matheson.* "What a splendid salvation is the sunshine, the mighty orb bringing healing in his wings! And if nature exerts such virtue upon the body, how much more shall the sovereign Sun bring health, power, and immortal life into the soul of all who seek him!" — *Rev. William L. Watkinson, D.D.* **Selah.** This word, which is found 71 times in the Psalter, is of uncertain meaning, but is probably a technical musical term calling upon the instruments to strike up and play an interlude. It is usually found where a change in the thought

2. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy salvation among all nations.

3. Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the peoples praise thee.

4. Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, and govern the nations upon earth. Sē'-lăh.

would make an interlude appropriate, but that is not the case here, unless the music was to emphasize the high-priestly benediction just given.

2. **That thy way may be known upon earth.** "God's *way* is his gracious method of dealing with men, explained in the next line as his *salvation*." — *Cambridge Bible.* God's way with his chosen people would make all other people want to become his. **Thy salvation among all nations.** "This all nations need, but many of them do not know it, desire it, or seek it. Our prayer and labor should be that the knowledge of salvation may become as universal as the light of the sun. Despite the gloomy notions of some, we cling to the belief that the kingdom of Christ will embrace the whole habitable globe, and that all flesh shall see the salvation of God: for this glorious consummation we agonize in prayer." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

Luca della Robbia.
Choir of Children Singing.
National Museum, Florence.

3. **Let the peoples praise thee, O God.** "Mark the sweet order of the blessed Spirit: first, mercy; then, knowledge; last of all, praising of God. We cannot see his countenance except he be merciful to us; and we cannot praise him except his way be known upon earth. His mercy breeds knowledge; his knowledge, praise." — *John Boys.* **Let all the peoples praise thee.** The leader of an orchestra notes instantly the failure of one of the least instruments in the farthest corner. Our Father knows when the smallest and humblest of his children ceases to praise him. How much more does he miss a whole nation that should be rejoicing in the knowledge of divine mercy and love! How much more does he long for the addition of a whole people to the grand chorus of redemption! It is the fixed purpose of missions to bring *all* nations to praise God — people farthest north in ice and darkness, people in the swampy depths of the most difficult tropical forests, people scattered among the mountains, people almost lost on the islands in far-away seas. Let *all* the peoples praise thee!

4. **Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy.** Many books have been written on gladness, but there is only one rule for it: Obey God. Then alone will you sing for joy. "Some sing for form, others for show, some as a duty, others as an amusement, but to sing from the heart, this is to sing indeed." — *Spurgeon.* And when a whole nation thus sings — when all nations thus sing — what a mighty chorus of praise will rise to heaven! **For thou wilt judge the peoples with equity.** "The reason why the nations shall rejoice is stated to be the establishment of a universal kingdom of

5. Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the peoples praise thee.
6. The earth hath yielded its increase: God, even our own God, will bless us.
7. God will bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

righteousness." — *Speaker's Commentary.* In those days justice was seldom found in the governments of the earth. Cruelties, extortions, and oppressions were common even in the best-ruled countries. The people longed for simple justice with an intensity which we in our more favored days can hardly realize. **And govern the nations upon earth.** Men will continue to govern them, but only as God directs. Every true ruler will first be ruled by him. **Selah.** Here ends one of the three strophes into which the psalm is divided, there is a break in the theme, and "selah" comes in appropriately.

5. **Let the peoples praise thee,** etc. This is the refrain of the psalm, and fittingly introduces the third strophe, emphasizing the character of the psalm as a thanksgiving hymn.

6. **The earth hath yielded its increase.** The land had enjoyed a full harvest, and the psalmist saw in it a token of further blessings to come. All that God has given us of riches and strength and peace is proof of his desire to heap greater joys upon us, and to continue doing this forever. **God, even our own God, will bless us.** "What rapture there is here! Faith lays its hand on God, and appropriates him for itself. There is a wide difference between speaking of things and people as fair and useful, and saying of them, 'These are my own.' He is *our own*, because he has made himself so, and has taken us to be his forever. 'His every act pure blessing is.'" — *F. B. Meyer.* "The circumference of blessing for the whole earth is set around the center of the covenant nation." — *Joseph Bryant Rotherham.*

7. **God will bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.** "The prayer of the first verse is the song of the last. We have the same phrase twice, and truly the Lord's blessing is manifold; he blesses and blesses and blesses again. How many are his beautitudes! How choice his benedictions! They are the peculiar heritage of his chosen. He is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe. In this verse we find a song for all future time. God shall bless us is our assured confidence; he may smite us, or strip us, or even slay us, but he must bless us. He cannot turn away from doing good to his elect. '*And all the ends of the earth shall fear him.*' The far-off shall fear. The ends of the earth shall end their idolatry, and adore their God. All tribes, without exception, shall feel a sacred awe of the God of Israel. Ignorance shall be removed, insolence subdued, injustice banished, idolatry abhorred, and the Lord's love, light, life, and liberty shall be over all, the Lord himself being King of kings and Lord of lords. *Amen, and Amen.*" — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

III. **A PSALM OF GOD'S GOODNESS,** Ps. 100 : 1–5. This psalm is referred to the return of the Jews from exile and the building of the second temple. "The series of anthems for the dedication of the restored temple which begins in Psalm 95 with a call to Israel to worship ends fitly with a call to the whole earth to join in Israel's worship, acknowledging Jehovah as the only true God, whose claims upon the allegiance of the whole world have been attested by his recent mercy to Israel. From ancient times this psalm has been used in the daily service of the synagogue, except upon certain festivals. The metrical version of it, universally known and loved as the 'Old Hundredth' (*i.e.* from the *old* version of the Psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins), first appeared in 1560. Its author is believed to have been William Kethe, a native of Scotland, who was forced to fly during the Marian persecutions, and joined the exiles at Geneva in 1556." — *Prof. A. F. Kirkpatrick, D.D.* Verse 2 of the psalm, "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves," was chosen for his own tombstone by Edward Fitzgerald, the English poet, whose translation of Omar Khayyam is so much admired.

The psalmist calls upon "all lands" to praise the Lord in song and to serve him with gladness. The reasons are given, and no better reasons could be named: because the Lord made us, because he chose us to be his people, because he is good, and because his mercy and truth are everlasting. The overflowing proof of all this is the life of Christ, and the Christian can sing the One Hundredth Psalm more fervently than any one else. This, in brief, is the message which the missionaries are taking to "all lands." It is no message of gloom, but of gladness; no errand of punishment, but of mercy; no transient offer, but an eternal gift.

The Missionary Meaning of the Psalms. Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D., in his volume, *The Bible as a Missionary Book*, writes thus concerning the missionary message of the Psalms: "The Psalter, in more ways than one, is rich in missionary meaning. If Israel is the immediate subject, and if Jewish forms of expression prevail, yet we who have the New Testament in our hands can never read the Psalms without seeing Christ in the King, and the world-wide community of God in Israel. We thank and bless Judaism for giving us the Psalter, just as the world may thank England for giving it Shakespeare; but Shakespeare and the Psalter, once given, are the property not of a nation but of the world.

"And indeed the Psalter far more than Shakespeare belongs to mankind, for while that incomparable English of the Elizabethan drama defies translation into any other language, no poetry ever written is so translatable as the Psalms. They seem to be written in a universal tongue, and, except where the meaning of the original is obscure, there is no difficulty in rendering them poetically in any language under heaven.

"And as the language is plain, so the thought and the feeling are those of man as such. James Gilmour, a solitary missionary in Mongolia, fills his journals and letters with gratitude for the Psalms; he found them equal to all his needs and the expression of all his singular situations. He could, he said, launch his canoe at any time upon that stream, and be carried whither he would go. Any man anywhere can make the same discovery.

"The hymn-book or the poetry of the most particularistic nation in the world is found to be that which meets the universal need. The hymns of the Veda or the Homeric hymns can be read for their literary interest, but what people outside India would use in worship the one, or what people anywhere would use in worship the other? Yet these Hebrew Psalms are used wherever Christianity goes, and they have no small share in carrying it into the uttermost parts of the earth.

"There can be no hesitation in recognizing the supernatural cause of this remarkable fact. Whoever were the human authors of the Psalms, the real author was the Spirit of God. No human poet and no series of poets could have produced a collection capable of accomplishing such results as this has accomplished.

"There is one thing which strikes the reader of the Psalter at once, and that is the constant anticipation of a King that shall reign in righteousness, and of a Kingdom that shall reach to the uttermost ends of the earth. The King of whom the Psalmists sing is more God than man, and the dominion which is promised to him is humanity rather than Israel. Of course the national glory is there, but we know that we are dealing with a great missionary thought, which admits of no limitation short of humanity as a whole.

"But the missionary character of the Psalter is not only in its forecast of the Messianic kingdom, but much more in the fulness, the richness, and the beauty with which it delineates both the deepest experiences and the most transient moods of the human soul in its relation with God. Nothing important seems to be left out. Always in every Psalm there is God; the poet speaks of his glory, his majesty, his manifestations in nature, the law he has given, the worship of his house, his constant oversight of human affairs; but above all he speaks of God as a friend and even a lover, as a refuge, as a dwelling-place, as an overshadowing presence. And what is so remarkable is this, that though these Psalms are for the most part composed expressly for use in the temple worship, the merely ritual part of that worship, which is to pass away, is hardly referred to at all, while the spiritual realities which it symbolized seem to take its place.

"It would have been inconceivable beforehand how hymns could have been written in Judaism, to be sung in Christendom; how the songs of the temple, which was to be destroyed, could be suitable to the temple not made with hands; how a community which was thinking only of its exclusive privileges and its superiority to the other nations of the world could unconsciously forecast a holy King to whom all the nations of the heathen should be given, and compose the grateful praises in which a ransomed humanity would join. But that inconceivable possibility is precisely the miracle which is realized in the Psalms, and the missionary significance of it must be plain as soon as it is pointed out."

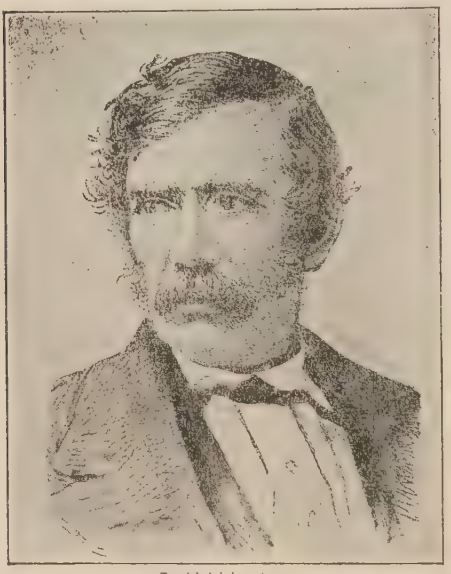
Missionary Illustrations. The Psalms have always been dear to the missionaries, have upheld them in many trials and inspired them to even more ardent zeal. The following are only a few of many illustrations that might be given.

David Brainerd was a devout and heroic young missionary to the Indians of Delaware and Pennsylvania in the first half of the eighteenth century. His remarkable

journal was a great inspiration to others to take up the missionary life, and its words are largely drawn from the Psalms. It was from this journal that William Carey and Henry Martyn drew much of their missionary fire.

William Carey, a consecrated English cobbler, became a pioneer missionary to India, and the real founder of modern missions. Ps. 16 : 4 was the text of the sermon preached to dedicate Carey to the missionary work. Carey became a great scholar as well as missionary and prefixed Ps. 145 : 10 to his edition of Roxburgh's *Flora Indica*. Once when near his end, as he thought, Carey asked that his funeral sermon should be preached from the text, Ps. 51 : 1, 2.

Henry Martyn, the first Anglican missionary to the heathen, labored in India and Persia. His journal is full of references to the Psalms. He was reading Psalm 10 to the girl he dearly loved when he was hastily summoned to his ship, and left her never to see her again. When his missionary enterprise was dark, he drew courage from Ps. 22 : 27. He greatly enjoyed translating the Psalms into Persian.



David Livingstone.
From "David Livingstone," by permission of Fleming H. Revell Co.

Alexander Duff, the eloquent missionary orator, was shipwrecked on his way to India. Kneeling on the sand with the rest of the passengers, Duff read aloud Psalm 107. Duff and his household began every day by singing together one of the Psalms, and on his journeys the Psalms were ever in mind.

Allen Gardiner gave his years to most persistent and almost hopeless effort on behalf of South America, "the Neglected Continent." Finally, with a little company of fellow-missionaries, he starved to death on Picton Island off Tierra del Fuego. Gardiner's diary, which was found by the relief expedition, was full of direful experiences and with comforting quotations from the Psalms : Ps. 27 : 14 ; 102 : 17 ; 34 : 10 ; 57 : 1 ; 55 : 22. A hand was found painted on a rock near the cave in which Gardiner lived, and under it "Ps. 62 : 5-8."

When David Livingstone, the great missionary to Africa, left home he read Psalms 121 and 135 and prayed. At every turn of his difficult and perilous life he was sustained, he said, by Ps. 37 : 5. When Stanley found him and sent back his men and stores Livingstone's joy, expressed in his diary, was couched in the words of Ps. 103 : 1.

James Hannington, the first bishop of equatorial Africa, was killed by the natives at the age of thirty-seven, and almost upon his arrival. Every morning on that fatal journey he read or repeated the "Traveller's Psalm," Ps. 121, and his diary repeats, day after day : "Comforted by Ps. 27," "Much comforted by Ps. 28," "Held up by Ps. 30, which came with great power."

## LESSON VII. — November 18.

## OUR LORD JESUS A MISSIONARY. — Matthew 9 : 35–38 ; Mark 1 : 29–39 ; Luke 8 : 1–3 ; 10 : 1 ; John 3 : 16, 17.

**PRINT Matt. 9 : 35-38 ; Luke 8 : 1-3 ; John 3 : 16, 17.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.* — JOHN 3 : 16.

**Devotional Reading** : Ps. 40 : 1–10.

**Primary Topic** : JESUS PREACHING IN CITY AND COUNTRY.
**Lesson Material** : Matt. 9 : 35–38 ; Luke 8 : 1–3.
**Memory Verse** : The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19 : 10.
**Junior Topic** : JESUS A MISSIONARY.
**Lesson Material** : Matt. 9 : 35–38 ; Luke 8 : 1–3.
**Memory Verses** : John 3 : 16, 17.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : THE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY OF JESUS.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : CHRIST'S MISSIONARY ZEAL.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will get a view of Jesus preaching. The teacher will try to show the class what a wonderful thing it must have been to hear Jesus, how the men and women and children of the villages thrilled when they heard that he was coming, how they rushed out to meet him. Tell the children a number of stories of Christ's preaching, — by the seashore, on the mountain, in crowded cities, by the roadside. Tell them also how the missionaries go about preaching through the heathen cities and villages.

**The Older Classes** will review Christ's entire life in its missionary aspects. He was himself a foreign missionary, come from heaven to earth. He was also a home missionary, doing virtually all his work in his home country. Discuss his methods and results, and try to decide whether all his methods are applicable to the present day.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Matt. 9 : 35–38, winter of A.D. 29, third year of Christ's ministry. Mark 1 : 29–39, April, A.D. 28. Luke 8 : 1–3, autumn, A.D. 28. Luke 10 : 1, December, A.D. 29. John 3 : 16, 17, April, A.D. 27.

**Place.** — The Matthew and Mark passages and Luke 8 : 1–3, Galilee. Luke 10 : 1, Peræa. John 3 : 16, 17, Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's itineraries: their scope.
Christ's missionary methods.

Christ Healing the Paralytic. J. Restout.
Louvre, Paris.

Christ's ideal for home missions.
Christ's ideal for foreign missions.
Do modern missionaries use all of Christ's methods?
Christ as a model of missionary zeal.

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The Missionary Activity of Jesus.**

I. CHRIST'S HARVEST, Matt. 9:35–38.
The shepherd's compassion.
The harvester's eagerness.

II. CHRIST'S MISSION, Mark 1:29–39.
Healing and preaching.
"To this end came I forth."

III. CHRIST'S GOSPEL, Luke 8:1–3; 10:1.
"The good tidings of the kingdom."
Enlisting other missionaries.

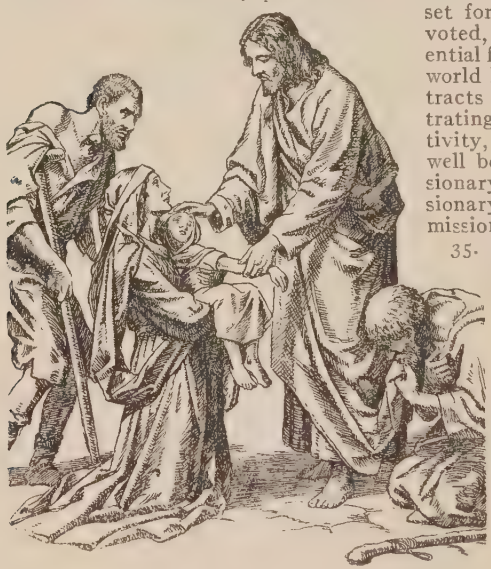
IV. CHRIST'S SALVATION, John 3:16, 17.
The boundless love of God.
Salvation through the Son of God.

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*Lives of Christ*, by Farrar, Dawson, Pressensé, Paterson-Smyth, Davis, Edersheim, Lees, etc. *Commentaries on the Gospels*. Brown's *The Master's Way*. Spurgeon's *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. Latham's *Pastor Pastorum*. Horton's *The Bible as a Missionary Book*. Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Ingram's *The Gospel in Action*. Johnson's *From Love to Praise*. Horton's *The Triumphant Life*. Pierson's *The Heart of the Gospel*. Banks's *Christ and His Friends*.

MATT. 9:35. And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.

I. **CHRIST'S HARVEST**, Matt. 9:35–38. Jesus Christ was — and is — the greatest of all missionaries. To him all missionary hopes of the Old Testament point forward. In him all missionary activities since his life on earth have centered. From him all missionary power and confidence come. In the Gospels we see him set forth as a missionary, supremely devoted, and wise, resourceful, and influential far above all other missionaries this world has known. We are to study extracts from each of the four Gospels illustrating Christ's missionary zeal and activity, but the four Gospels entire might well be studied, as the beginnings of missionary history, the best manual of missionary methods, and the reservoir of missionary inspiration.



Christ Healing the Sick. Hofmann.

35. **And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages.** We have first a scene in the very heart of Christ's ministry. The year of beginnings has been followed by a year of foundation-laying. We stand at the outset of the great third year of the ministry, the year of development. We are to note the spirit that underlay that development, and the methods used to carry the ministry to its culmination. And first, we see that Jesus, like all successful Christian workers, did not stand still and wait for people to come to him, but went boldly forth to the people. The first two letters of Gospel spell Go. "*Go* out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in." "*Go* ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." **Teaching in their synagogues.** Strangers who were thought to be able to expound the law were sought out by the "rulers of the synagogues" and invited to speak to the congregations. "Jesus turned old institutions to good account: the synagogues became his seminaries." — *Spurgeon*. Thus his missionaries through all ages have wisely built on all that was sound in the native religions and their institutions. **And preaching the gospel of the kingdom.** "Gospel" means "good

36. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd.

tidings " ; the Greek word has been taken over in our English word " evangel." When Pilate asked Jesus if he was a king, our Lord declared that he was, but he also said that his kingdom was " not of this world." Paul (Rom. 14 : 17) finely defined the kingdom of God as " righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." " When our Lord came into villages where he was known, people crowded to him from all sides, and the new delight of communion with God — the assurance that the whisper which told them that God cared for them, was a true voice — beamed from the hearers' faces and gladdened the Master's soul." — *Rev. Henry Latham.* **And healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.** We have records of Christ's healing blindness, dumbness, demonic possession, deafness, lameness, dropsy, leprosy, fever, palsy, issue of blood, withered muscles, and — the greatest of all miracles — bringing the dead back to life. Also we know that only a small part of his miracles have been recorded. Christ was indeed " the Great Physician." " It would have been hard to disentangle the accounts of the healing miracles wrought by Christ from the narrative of his life — the very attempt would all but compel men to banish the Gospels from serious historical consideration." — *Dean Charles R. Brown, D.D.* In humble following of the Master modern missions have added medicine and surgery to their equipment. Indeed, they often begin with medical work, and gain entrance thus for the gospel.

Raphael.

Healing the Demoniac Boy.

36. **But when he saw the multitudes.** Jesus always had an eye to the crowds. He had a love for folks. They swarmed around him wherever he went. They drove him to make a fishing-boat his pulpit. They forced him to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and followed him thither. They compelled him to go up near Tyre in order to rest. But that was the way he wanted it. He was a missionary, and a true missionary goes where there are crowds. **He was moved with compassion for them.** Pity is probably the fundamental feeling of the missionary. His heart is torn with sympathy for human woes. He sees them everywhere — not merely sorrow for hunger and weariness and other material distresses, but chiefly for the needs of the soul, unsatisfied longings, the heavy load of sin, the blackness of a hopeless future. The missionary's compassion brings him very near his Lord. **Because they were distressed and scattered.** The word translated " distressed " " originally means to *flay*, *rend*, or *mangle*. Æschylus uses it of the tearing of dead bodies by fish. As appropriate to the figure of sheep, it might be rendered here *fleeced*. The word translated ' scattered ' means *thrown down*, *prostrated*. It is not the *dispersion* one from another, but their *prostration* in themselves that is meant. They have cast themselves down for very weariness." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* Christ saw that his people were in a pitiful plight, and he pitied them with all his great heart. **As sheep not having a shepherd.** That was why they were worn and weary, torn and wounded — they had had no shepherd to guide them. Without a shepherd " the sheep go wandering in any direction, and with no goal ; and wherever one has jumped, a dozen others will go after him, and so they are wearied out long before the day's journey is ended, and they never reach the goal." — *Alexander Maclaren.* These words are a terrific condemnation of the religious leaders of Christ's day, those " blind guides " ; and they are a trumpet-call to every Christian to-day, since

37. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

each is to be a shepherd as far as his own Spirit-led powers extend, and is to do his best for this world full of wandering sheep.

37. **Then saith he unto his disciples.** His twelve disciples, the chosen helpers whom he had called around him. No wise missionary tries to work alone, but goes forth two and two, takes appointment from a mission board, gets a denomination back of him. The missionary enterprise is the greatest coöperative work the world has ever seen. **The harvest indeed is plenteous.** Christ changes the comparison, and now sees, not a flock of sheep untended by a shepherd, but a great ripe harvest field untended by a sufficient number of reapers. And Christ saw a *plenteous* harvest. "This hopeful judgment as to the people of the land, contrasted with Pharisaic despair and contempt, was characteristic of Jesus." —*Expositor's Greek Testament.* Missionaries always face white harvest fields, and from many lands, especially from India and China, the most populous of all, come urgent pleas for more workers that the waiting harvests of souls may be garnered. **But the laborers are few.** Christ had more than twelve disciples, but only twelve who were willing to leave their homes and go out with him into the harvest fields. Christ to-day has millions of disciples, but only thousands of missionaries. Yet missions are the real business of every Christian, and it has been truly said that on each Christian rests the burden of proof that he ought *not* to go to the mission field. If all Christians should take it for granted that — lacking plain evidence of God's will to the contrary — they were to go forth as missionaries, the world would be won to Christ in a generation.

Jesus Heals a Man with the Dropsy.

38. **Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest.** Every difficulty in connection with Christ's work is to be overcome by prayer to Christ. **That he send forth laborers into his harvest.** The word "missionary" means "one sent forth." Every missionary has his commission from Christ. What an honor! What a responsibility!

II. **CHRIST'S MISSION,** Mark 1:20–30. We have here a section from Christ's early ministry in eastern Galilee. It is a story of a Sabbath in Capernaum, a full Sabbath, beginning with a discourse in the synagogue that amazed all the congregation by its authoritative force. Then followed the cure of a demoniac right there in the synagogue, giving still further evidence of Christ's authority. Next our Lord healed the mother-in-law of Simon Peter, who had been seized by a violent fever. And finally Mark gives us this beautiful twilight scene: "At even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons."

No wonder, after such a day, that our Lord felt the need of filling up his reservoirs of divine power. Doubtless the importunate seekers for health had pressed upon him till late the night before, but he knew they would crowd upon him the following

LUKE 8: 1. And it came to pass soon afterwards, that he went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God, and with him the twelve,

day, so " in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place and there prayed." Thus was the Saviour obliged to take as by stealth his seasons of communion with his Father. This precious opportunity was interrupted by his disciples, who were familiar with his ways and knew where to find him. " All are seeking thee," they said, as he knew they would. But Christ would not go back to Capernaum, where he had done enough for the time. " Let us go elsewhere into the next towns," he said, " that I may preach there also ; for to this end came I forth." So he proceeded throughout all Galilee, carrying everywhere the gracious words and healing miracles which he had bestowed upon Capernaum.

The Testimony of John the Baptist.

" To this end came I forth." That was the thing which the Son of God came for, out of the peace and joy of the unseen world into this world so full of misery. He came to speak with authority about God and God's love for men, and to illustrate that love with enough ministry to weary and worn bodies to make it perfectly plain.

This is the two-fold purpose of Christ's missionary representatives to-day, and that Sabbath at Capernaum is the model for every day of every Christian missionary. The missionary also speaks with authority, with an authority bestowed upon him by Christ. He cannot work such miracles as Christ performed, but science enables him to do much that would have seemed miraculous in Christ's day, and always there is the great miracle of love. Christ promised that his followers should do greater works than he had done, and all of Christ's promises are fulfilled.

III. **CHRIST'S GOSPEL**, Luke 8 : 1–3 ; 10 : 1. The following verses from Luke describe one of Christ's early tours through Galilee, but not the earliest. He had called the twelve, had preached the Sermon on the Mount, had healed the centurion's servant at Capernaum, and raised from the dead the son of the widow at Nain.

1. **And it came to pass soon afterwards.** Luke has just told about the sinning woman who anointed Christ's feet at the house of Simon the Pharisee. Now he tells what other grateful women did for the Saviour. **That he went about through cities and villages.** Itinerant preaching such as this has always characterized Christian missions. Our missionaries establish central stations in the large cities, usually with outstations in the smaller places which are sometimes at a considerable distance, and in addition they make regular journeys through the unoccupied villages and cities, preaching in the open squares and holding conversations with inquirers, leaving be-

2. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary that was called Măg-dă-lē'-nē, from whom seven demons had gone out,
3. And Jŏ-ăn'-nȧ the wife of Chū'-zăs Herod's steward, and Sū-săn'-nȧ, and many others, who ministered unto them of their substance.

hind seed which often springs up in a native church. **Preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God.** "Preaching" is literally "herald'ng," "proclaiming as a herald." "Bringing the good tidings" is one word in the Greek, the word "evangelizing." That the kingdom of God is coming, that in Christ it has already come, is indeed good news, for it means the establishment of perfect justice, profound peace, and absolute and perpetual joy! The full coming of that kingdom depends on the work of Christian preachers and missionaries. God help us to hasten the day! **And with him the twelve.** "Jesus lived chiefly with his spiritual family, freely using their hospitality, as did the rabbis of the time. His ministrations were divided between the multitudes to whom he preached the gospel, and the familiar circle of his disciples, whom he taught with a solicitude only equalled by his patience." — *Rev. E. de Pressensé, D.D.*

2. **And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities.** The evil spirits were beings from the unseen world that took possession of persons in those days, causing insane acts and great misery. Demon-possession is thought by many to have been what we call insanity, but the Gospel accounts show it to have been more than that. Modern missionaries in China and India have observed phenomena almost exactly like the demon-possession of Gospel times. "Infirmities" includes other maladies. It was gratitude that led these women to follow Jesus, and gratitude is still the most powerful influence in producing missionary Christians.

Jesus Preaching from Peter's Boat. Hofmann.

**Mary that was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out.** She was called Magdalene, from her home in Magdala on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, to distinguish her from the other disciples named Mary. She was a woman of noble character, and is not to be confounded, as popular tradition has confounded her, with "the woman that was a sinner." Seven, the perfect number, describes an especially malignant case of demon-possession.

3. **And Joanna the wife of Chuzas Herod's steward.** This was Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist. Chuzas, his steward, was the manager of his palace and property, and the word used here may imply that he also had charge of the education of Herod's children — an important officer, and his wife would be an important woman. **And Susanna, and many others.** "Susanna" means "Lily," and beyond that we know nothing of her. We have an echo of these verses in Matt. 27: 55, the "many women" who beheld sadly "from afar" the terrible scene of Christ's crucifixion. **Who ministered unto them of their substance.** "This statement by Luke is brief but illuminating. It throws light upon an interesting question to which no other answer is given in the Gospels: How did Jesus and his followers secure financial support during the years of his ministry? Evidently those who had received from him spiritual help gladly supplied his temporal wants and rendered to him all needful service. Thus this passage indicates not only what Jesus did for women, but what women did for him. It suggests a question: Who can estimate how far the gifts and sacrifices of grateful women have been making possible, through the passing ages, the preaching of the gospel in all the world?" — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* "What a Messiah for the eye of flesh, this being living on the charity of men! But what a Messiah for the spiritual eye, this Son of God living on the love

John 3 : 16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

of those to whom his own love is giving life ! What an interchange of good offices between heaven and earth goes on around his person ! " — *Godet.*

*Enlisting Other Missionaries.* Christ's appointment of the twelve disciples marked the first stage in his plan for winning the world. The next stage was his appointment of seventy others, and sending them forth to prepare the way for his coming. This was the beginning of organized Christianity. It was the foundation of our churches, our denominational machinery, our interdenominational societies and associations, and our missionary enterprises at home and abroad. The wise plan of sending forth the seventy two and two was the beginning of Christian coöperation. We have learned that two can do more than twice as much as one. Their joint wisdom and strength, and their mutual aid, comfort, and inspiration, render them almost irresistible. Christian comradeship has been a mighty factor in the onward progress of the kingdom of God.

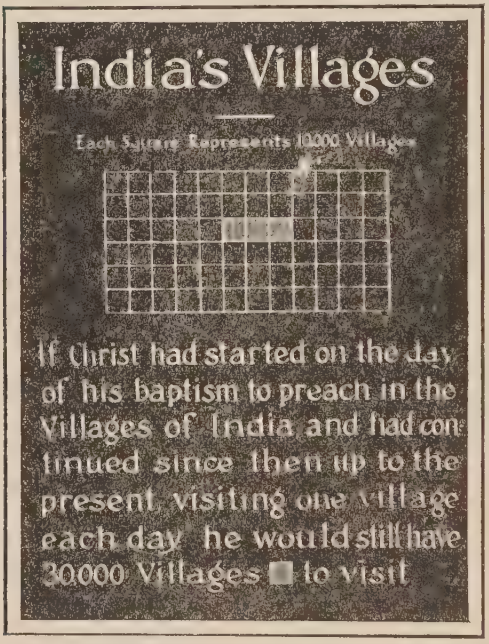
IV. **CHRIST'S SALVATION**, John 3 : 16, 17. In these verses we have the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ. John 3 : 16 is the most precious verse of the Bible. Concerning it Luther wrote : " It were well worthy to be written in letters of gold, if it could be, in the heart ; justly would it be the daily lesson and meditation of every Christian, that so it might visit his thoughts in his prayers, strengthening his faith and quickening his heart to call upon God ; for it is a word which has power to make mourners joyful, to make dead men alive, if the heart only steadfastly believes in it."

From a photograph.
"Come unto Me."
Thorwaldsen's Statue of Christ.

16. **For God so loved the world.** Many find it hard to believe that God loves the world. He is so rich and powerful that they do not see how he can show his love by giving up anything for men or enduring anything for men, as earthly fathers and mothers do. Men have not seen God. How can they love a vague, far-off, impersonal force ? How can it love them ? Christ is the all sufficient answer to these doubts, the perfect proof of God's love for the world. **That he gave his only begotten Son.** Nicodemus, hearing these words, would at once think of the sacrifice of Isaac not far from the spot where the words were spoken. Here is the Message of Missions : Jesus Christ, the Son of God. " The New Testament is concerned with a message and a Man. At first the Man delivers the message, but more and more he becomes himself an essential part of it, until, when his brief earthly course is over, the message has become so identified with the Man that it is the task of all who knew him to proclaim the Man as the message." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* **That whosoever believeth on him should not perish.** Believing on Christ " is the daring committal of ourselves to him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the actual personal committal to him as a Living Being, as a Real Person, and a Real Presence." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.* " But suppose men do not believe and will not believe ? Do you not see the inevitable, irresistible next step ? If men will not believe, then they still will perish. God's love does not save everybody,

17. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.

although it goes out to everybody. Some men will not take its great gift. And if the sacrifice is rejected, how can it help the sinner it is made for?" — *Rev. Herrick Johnson, D.D., LL.D.* **But have eternal life.** "Eternal life" includes living forever, but it means more than that, since the evil live forever, but in eternal death. "Life" here means the life worth living, the life of purity, peace, power, and joy, life lived in communion with God; and it is to be endless for those that believe on Christ. "There are *ten words* in this verse that are quite prominent, such as 'God,' 'loved,' 'world,' 'whosoever,' and so on. These ten words are in five pairs. There is one pair of words that has to do with two persons of the Godhead — God the Father, and God the Son. There is a second pair of words that has to do with the expression of the Father's attitude or posture toward this world — he 'loved' and he 'gave.' Then there is a third pair of words that refers to the objects of the divine love — 'world,' and 'whosoever.' Then there is a fourth pair of words that shows us what the attitude of man ought to be when God's love and gift come to his knowledge — 'believe' and 'have.' Then the last pair of words points us to the extremes of human destiny: the result of rejection, and the result of acceptance — 'perish,' and 'life.'" — *Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.*


India's Villages
Each Square Represents 10000 Villages
If Christ had started on the day of his baptism to preach in the villages of India and had continued since then up to the present visiting one village each day he would still have 30000 Villages to visit

17. **For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world.** Christ said (John 9 : 39), "For judgment came I into the world," but there is no contradiction. Wickedness is always judged by goodness. The very presence of Christ in the world divides men into two classes, those for him and those against him. But that is a judgment of choice, made by men themselves; the judgment of final approval or condemnation was not made by Christ at his first coming but will be made when he comes a second time to judge the world. **But that the world should be saved through him.** Condemnation — that was the attitude of the heathen gods toward men; salvation — that is God's attitude toward men as disclosed in Jesus Christ. No wonder that missionaries are received with joy when their message is understood!

The world is to be saved through Christ, by the agency of Christ's followers. "There was a book written not many years ago of which the title was: *The Christian Life; A Response.* It was a beautiful title, which put the Christian life in the true attitude — it should not be lived out of fear of hell, not lived to purchase heaven, but rather as a response to the love of God: the response of worship; the response of progressive purification of character; the response of public spirit instead of private interest; the response of service. If he came down from heaven, and so loved the world, we must find a way in which to love our fellow-men as he loved us. Indeed, there is only one answer to 'God so loved the world' — God so loved me — then *so* will I love God; with a like sacrifice, with a like abandonment, with a like perseverance, a like devotion." — *Bishop Arthur F. Ingram, D.D.*

"The parable of the Seeking Shepherd may be said to contain the germ of all missionary enterprise. Truth never succeeds on any large scale without the spirit

of active propaganda. It is not the Koran which explains the triumph of Mohammed, but the propagandist fire which he kindled in a multitude of ardent followers. Certainly it is not the Gospels which first drew attention to Christ, since his church had already taken firm hold upon the world long before the Gospels were generally known. The real source of triumph lay in the energy of individuals who went out to seek the lost, everywhere compelling men to listen by the novelty of their message and the enthusiasm of their lives. Christianity is propagandist or it is nothing ; and it can only perish by the loss of that divine ardor which Christ himself breathed into it when he sent forth his disciples to teach all nations, secure in the conviction that he was with them alway, even to the end of the world." — *Rev. William J. Dawson, D.D.*

## LESSON VIII. — November 25.

## CHRISTIANS CALLED TO BE MISSIONARIES. — John 17 : 18 ; Matthew 28 : 16–20 ; Acts 1 : 6–8.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.*** — MATT. 28 : 19.

**Devotional Reading** : Isa. 52 : 7–12.
**Reference Material** : Matt. 5 : 13–16 ; John 15 : 8 ; Rom. 10 : 14, 15.
**Primary Topic** : TELLING EVERY ONE ABOUT JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 1 : 6–11.
**Memory Verse** : Ye shall be my witnesses. Acts 1 : 8.
**Junior Topic** : OUR MARCHING ORDERS.
**Lesson Material** : Matt. 28 : 16–20 ; Acts 1 : 6–11.
**Memory Verses** : Matt. 28 : 18–20.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : WORKING TOGETHER WITH CHRIST.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : WORLD-WIDE WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The purpose of this lesson is obvious : it is to inspire in our pupils a sense of personal obligation for missions : to give their lives to the missionary cause, by going, if possible, and certainly by giving, working, and praying. To that end we are studying our Lord's threefold command. No pupil in the school is too young to receive the thrilling message, and understand it. Thousands of lives will be turned toward enterprising Christianity as the result of this lesson.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The Lord's Supper, Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30. Christ's appearance in Galilee, April and May, A.D. 30. Christ's ascension, Thursday, May 18, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — The upper room in Jerusalem. Some mountain in Galilee. The Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Proofs that Christ's purpose was as wide as the world.
Other missionary urgings from Christ additional to those given in our lesson.
Christ's promises of his continued presence with his followers.
The present need for more missionaries.
Excuses for not going to the mission field and their answers.
Rewards of obedience to Christ's Great Commission.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT** : **Working together with Christ.**

I. AS CHRIST, SO CHRISTIANS, John 17 : 18.
- Christ sent into the world.
- Christians sent into the world.

II. THE GREAT COMMISSION, Matt. 28 : 16–20.
- The authority.
- The commission.
- The companionship.

III. THE PROGRAMME OF MISSIONS, Acts 1 : 6–8.
- Power for missions.
- The work of missions.
- The scope of missions.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Meyer's *Love to the Uttermost.* Coyle's *The Church and the Times.* Gifford in *The People's Church Pulpit.* Chapman's *Received Ye the Holy Ghost?* Gregg's *Facts That Call for Faith.* Shepardson's *The Suffering Saviour.* Baring-Gould's *The Sunday Round, Vol. 2.* Vaughan's *Stones from the Quarry.* van Dyke's *The Open Door.* Horton's *The Triumphant Life.* Sweetapple's *The Earthly Footsteps of Jesus.* Morgan's *The Life of the Christian.* Holden's

*The Spirit of Life.* Albertson's *College Sermons.* Ingram's *The Gospel in Action.* McClelland's *The Mind of Christ.* Hodges's *The Path of Life.* Thompson's *Burden-Bearing.* Parkhurst's *The Blind Man's Creed.* Whiton's *The Law of Liberty.* Morrison's *The Weaving of Glory.* Simpson's *Sermons.* Woolsey's *Religion of the Present and of the Future.* Liddon's *Easter Sermons, Vol. 2.* Welles's *Sermons and Addresses.* Smyth's *Footprints of the Saviour.* Fremantle's *Gospel of the Secular Life.*

JOHN 17: 18. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.

MATT. 28: 16. But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

I. **AS CHRIST, SO CHRISTIANS,** John 17 : 18. This verse, which makes a missionary of every true Christian, is part of our Saviour's prayer in the upper room of the Lord's Supper, uttered just before Gethsemane, the trial, and the crucifixion. "'The most precious fragment of the past,' is the unstinted eulogium which a thoughtful man has passed on this transcendent prayer ; transcending in its scope of view, its expressiveness, its tender pathos, all other prayers of which we have record." — *F. B. Meyer.*

18. **As thou didst send me into the world.** "As" means "in the same way, for the same purpose, with the same powers, so far as we need them and can use them." Christ implied the fulness of this rich promise when he said that his followers should, after his death, do greater things than he had done. Our mission is along the same line as his mission. **Even so sent I them into the world.** "Them" means Christ's disciples listening to the prayer, and also, as the prayer itself states plainly, all that should become Christians in after time (John 17 : 20). "Into the world" is not unnecessary to the thought, "but suggests that as Christ's presence in the world was necessary for the fulfilment of God's purpose, so the sphere of the disciples' work is also 'the world.'" — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

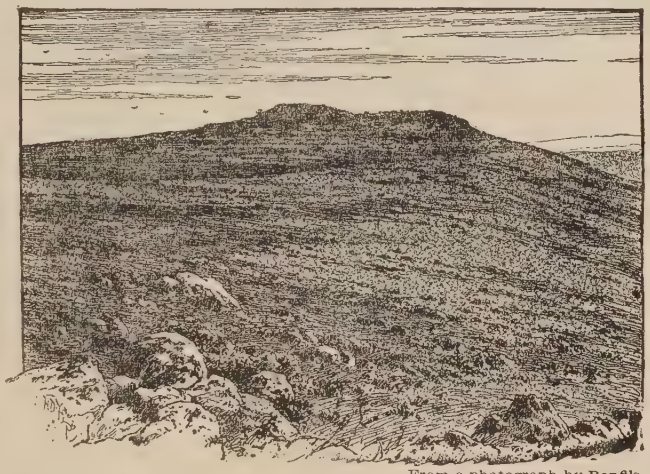
This great saying calls on every Christian to be an evangelist, a missionary. "Evangelism is obedience to our Lord ; it is carrying out the great commission. Evangelism is the spirit which says, 'Here am I, O Lord, send me.' It is Paul, eager to go anywhere, to suffer any hardship, to be all things to all men that by all means he might save some. It is John Knox crying out, 'Give me Scotland or I die.' It is Livingstone dying on his knees for Africa. It is John G. Paton giving his life for the cannibals of the New Hebrides. In one word, evangelism is Jesus who came to seek and to save that which was lost continued in his followers. It is the fountain-head of Christianity, the source from which all its growth, all its conquest, all its enlargement proceed. Evangelism is to our religion what our mines and farms and forests are to commerce. It furnishes the raw material out of which all Christian expansion and civilization are produced. If the Kingdom of God is to come on earth, men and women from the world must be brought under the King's sway, recruits from the ranks of sin and unbelief must be led to the Saviour, the lost sheep must be saved — and that is evangelism." — *Rev. Robert F. Coyle, D.D.*

II. **THE GREAT COMMISSION,** Matt. 28 : 16–20. We have seen that our Lord, before his crucifixion, while yet in his mortal body, commanded his followers to carry on his work by becoming missionaries. We next find the Saviour, in his resurrection body, making the same appeal and issuing the same orders.

16. **But the eleven disciples went into Galilee.** Galilee was the scene of the greater part of Christ's ministry. There were more Christians in Galilee than in any other region. It was farther from the center of opposition to Christianity, which was Jerusalem. Probably at this time occurred the meeting of Christ with the five hundred disciples mentioned in 1 Cor. 15 : 6. **Unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.** The command to rendezvous in Galilee is recorded (Matt. 28 : 10), but we are not told of the appointment of a mountain. Perhaps it was the hill near Capernaum on which the Sermon on the Mount was preached. "From many points in this neighborhood it is possible to lift up the eyes like Abraham of old, and obtain a noble prospect northward and southward, eastward and westward. As from the hill above Nazareth, Christ and his disciples would see spread out before them not only much of Palestine, but much that would remind them of the great world outside — the Roman roads, the glistening sea, the northern and eastern mountains. It was impossible that their thoughts could remain within the narrow confines of the land." — *Rev. H. D. S. Sweetapple, D.D.*

17. And when they saw him, they worshipped *him;* but some doubted.
18. And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.
19. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

17. **And when they saw him, they worshipped him.** With each manifestation Christ's deity shone forth more clearly and filled them with greater awe. **But some doubted.** We are not to think that doubts remained among the eleven, but perhaps among the five hundred. Note the honesty with which this doubt is recorded, in itself a powerful evidence of the trustworthiness of the narrative.



Horns of Hattin. From a photograph by Bonfils.

18. **And Jesus came to them and spake unto them.** The verb "came" means "came near." He was to issue a royal command, but he drew close as a friend. **Saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.** Remember this verse as you read the verses about Christ's lowliness, his human nature, his poverty, his cross. "We lose the full message which Jesus speaks if we leave out the imperial note he uttered. It is not only that he stands at the door and knocks, but he claims the whole Imperial power in heaven and in earth." — *Bishop Ingram.* "Christ proclaims himself to be King of all nations, and he has the right to send men into all nations. He rules over Europe, and he has the right to send men into Europe. He is Governor of Asia, and he has the right to open every door." — *Bishop Matthew Simpson.*

19. **Go ye therefore.** *Therefore*: because Christ has all authority to command and he bids us go; because Christ has all authority to rule, and he bids us extend his kingdom. "Christ's 'Go' cannot mean 'Sit still.' It speaks of ever-widening progress, onward and outward. All can do something. Some can go, for men and women of all kinds and capabilities are needed as missionaries. As one has expressed it, 'The question came to me, not in the form, Why should I go? but in the form, Why should I stay at home?' All can interest themselves in the great cause of God. All can pray with greater fervency the great missionary clause of the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.' All can contribute to the support of missions." — *Rev. H. D. S. Sweetapple, D.D.*

*Illustration.* The foolish and wicked excuses for disobeying Christ's missionary command are well illustrated by an incident in the life of Hudson Taylor, the eminent missionary to China. He was on board a Chinese junk when a Chinese with whom he had been reasoning about salvation fell overboard. Taylor sprang after him but could not find the man. Seeing a boat with a drag-net near by, he called to the men in it to come and drag the spot, for a man was drowning. "It is not convenient," they answered. "But a man is drowning!" "We're busy fishing," they replied. "Come at once! I'll give you more than you'd make in many days' fishing." "How much will you give us?" "Oh, don't stay to discuss that! I'll give you five dollars." "We won't do it for that. Give us twenty dollars." "I haven't so much. Come quickly and I'll give you all I have." "How much is that?" "I

20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

don't know exactly; about fourteen dollars." So the men came over slowly, dragged the water, and in a minute brought the to surface the body of the drowned man. But the life was gone.

**And make disciples of all the nations.** This includes all that Christ taught, and all the blessed outgrowths of that teaching in Christian civilization. It means the spread of Christian doctrine, but also the spread of Christian homes and schools and libraries and hospitals and law courts and political freedom. "There is nothing whatever in the nature of things to prevent the missionary from being a great deal more useful than the statesman, the soldier, and the merchant put together. Europe was not only evangelized but civilized by Christian missionaries. The same work can be done again in Africa and Asia." — *Dean George Hodges, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "Assuming the unevangelized population of the globe to be one billion and a seventh and the number of true followers of Jesus Christ to be ten millions, allowing that each Christian were from this time forward to make one convert each year, within eight years from the present time the whole population of the globe would be at the foot of the cross!" — *Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D.D.*

**Baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.** Christ fashions his church by a rite, the beautiful ceremony which certifies a cleansed soul, a life washed free from sin by the blood of the Lamb of God. Christ builds his church upon a name, the wondrous Triune Name of God, the blessed truth of the Holy Trinity. "Rightly understood, the Trinity is no speculation of dry learning, far from daily needs; it is the divinely given watchword for the Christian's daily struggle. For it is the symbol and pledge of the great fact on which our salvation depends — the perpetual indwelling of God in the world, his eternal union with the life of humanity, and his presence in the individual breast." — *Rev. James M. Whiton, Ph.D.* "Our Lord did not say, 'Baptize into the *names*, but into the *name*.' You can find some who speak of the doctrine of the Trinity as if it were a denial of the unity and oneness of God. This, however, is far from the fact." — *Rev. Robert Vaughan.* We believe in one God, who exists as a Trinity of persons.

"'From the brightness of the glory,
Go ye forth,' He said;
'Heal the sick and cleanse the lepers,
Raise the dead.
Freely give I thee the treasure,
Freely give the same;
Take no store of gold or silver —
Take My Name.'" — *T. P.*

20. **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.** God's words are the basis of Christian teaching; and it is to be *all* of Christ's words, not simply those we find easiest or most in accord with our inclinations.

*Illustration.* The gospel will make a way for itself and convince its bitterest opponents. "I will tell you what the British East Indian Company said at the beginning of the nineteenth century: 'The sending of Christian missionaries into our eastern possessions is the maddest, most expensive, most unwarranted project that was ever proposed by a lunatic enthusiast.' I will tell you what the English Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal said at the close of the nineteenth century: 'In my judgment Christian missionaries have done more lasting good to the people of India than all other agencies combined.'" — *Henry van Dyke.*

**And lo, I am with you always.** "Lo" indicates the importance of the promise to follow. "*I* the Risen, Exalted, All-powerful One, with *you* my apostles and representatives engaged in the heroic task of propagating the faith." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* Note the present tense, *am*, not *will be.* All time is present to the Eternal. "Before Abraham was, *I am*," said Christ (John 8: 58). "I AM" is the name that God chose for himself (Ex. 3: 14). In the sublime consciousness of God's presence with them the missionaries have been upheld in all trials and have met all foes. **Even unto the end of the world.** Literally, "the end of the age or æon." "How was it possible that eleven men should go throughout the world? How, with their short span of life, carry the truth to, and admit into the Kingdom, generations yet unborn?" — *S. Baring-Gould.* The answer is in the continued presence of

ACTS 1: 6. They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Iṣ′-rā-ĕl?

7. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.

8. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Jū-dæ′-ā and Să-mā′-rĭ-ā, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

---

Christ with his people, age after age, to the end of time. He was the power working through the eleven disciples, and he is the power working through their successors, every missionary being a link in the stupendous chain.

III. **THE PROGRAMME OF MISSIONS**, Acts 1: 6–8. Christ's missionary command, spoken already under circumstances of so great solemnity, he now repeats for the third time, that it may sink into the souls of his disciples. And to make it impressive in the utmost degree, he uses for it his final minutes on earth, and proclaims it on the very brink of his ascension.

6. **They therefore, when they were come together.** The scene is the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem. The disciples would seem to have been talking with the risen Lord in Jerusalem, and then, doubtless at his bidding, to have left the city and come together again on Olivet. **Asked him, saying Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?** The Jews were under the rule of the Romans. How hard it was for even the disciples to get away from the hope of their race in a material kingdom of Messiah, one in which the heathen would be converted to Judaism and Messiah would reign on a literal throne! Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come," but he had in mind a far different and far more blessed kingdom than that of Cæsar.

7. **And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons.** "Times," means time in general; "seasons" in the Greek means *critical* periods. God knows that we work best by the day, that a knowledge of the future would merely draw from our present task the thought and energy that it needs.

*Illustration.* "How little did Caiaphas or Pilate dream, at the crucifixion of Christ, of the power that would go forth through all the ages from that submissive man who lay under their hand! How little did Leo X. and the leading Italians imagine that Martin Luther would make an era, and start a movement that would never stop! Who thought a little before the French Revolution, unless some dreamer regarded as wild, that all the thrones of Europe would be shaken, or that a man of Corsica would hold half the continent under his foot?" — *Theodore D. Woolsey.*

**Which the Father hath set within his own authority.** Not because he wishes to aggrandize himself, for surely he does not need to do that. Not because he does not wish his children to satisfy all reasonable curiosity with every legitimate desire. But the concealment is solely for our good.

8. **But ye shall receive power.** "The one lack of the Christian church to-day is the lack of spiritual power. Architecture, art, eloquence, music, all wait upon the church, but the church lacks power in and over the world." — *Rev. O. P. Gifford, D.D.* This is the lack of the church because it is the lack of the individual members of the church. "The chief promise of the New Testament is this promise. If you tore this promise out of the New Testament, it would be as though you tore the stars and bars out of the American flag. Take away Pentecost, and you have no New Testament. The greatest and most essential word in the New Testament is the name of the Holy Spirit." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.* "You cannot expect to receive power from him unless he has appointed you to the work for which you are seeking power." — *Rev. J. Stuart Holden.* The Spirit's power is for the Spirit's work. **When the Holy Spirit is come upon you.** "Every one who will give the Saviour undisputed possession of his life will know God better, he will be better able to apprehend Christ, and there will be growth; growth downward, 'Rooted in him' (Col. 2: 7); growth upward, 'Into him which is the head' (Eph. 4: 15); growth outward in all the fruits of the Spirit." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.* "It was a supernal power, it was a spiritual power, it was not a power that was to be generated by politics, literature, art, numbers, or enthusiam. It was power that was to come to their spirits as the result of their receiving the Holy Ghost. They were to *receive* it; they were not to develop up to it; it was not to be the natural outcome of any course of study or

thought." — *Rev. John Rhey Thompson.* **And ye shall be my witnesses.** A witness sees, and then tells what he has seen. If we once see Christ, we shall not be able to refrain from bearing witness to the heavenly vision, any more than Paul was. "This matter of witnessing is to take the whole life. 'The salt of the earth' witnesses whenever it preserves; 'the light of the world' witnesses whenever it shines; 'the leaven' witnesses whenever it lifts the meal. In the home, kitchen, nursery, or parlor; in the store, running errands or as a partner; on the street, coming and going; at the polls, voting; in the market-place, buying and selling, 'ye shall be my witnesses.'" — *Rev. O. P. Gifford, D.D.* "The value of every Christian life is that of positive and powerful testimony to the reality of the spiritual, the possibility of victory over evil, and the beauty of the divine ideal in human life." — *Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "The world expects the Christian to testify. There was a Christian business man who was greatly interested in the welfare of his employees. He provided generously for their compensation, for their comfort while they were at work. He had the habit of remembering the families of his laborers with gifts at Christmas time. One day he spoke to a clerk on the subject of religion, and as he did so, apologized for intruding upon a realm which was foreign to their business relations. The clerk said, 'You need not apologize; I have often wondered why you never spoke of that matter before. I have been disappointed that you did not mention the subject long ago.' Then said the merchant: 'In that case I apologize to you for my neglect, and I will ask my Master's forgiveness.'" — *Rev. C. C. Albertson, D.D.*

*Illustration.* "The friendless young man in London, who leads a pure life amidst strong temptations; the maid-of-all-work, who serves a hard master faithfully and affectionately; the delicately bred lady, who renounces the empty attractions of society, to nurse the fever-stricken sufferer in the ward of a hospital, or to teach a fallen sister, from whom her own pure nature shrinks, that it is possible to be pure, — these, turning their eyes on Calvary, witness to Jesus. To sacrifice self for others, to sacrifice self for truth, is to bear the witness." — *Liddon.*

**Both in Jerusalem.** There, where the apostles were, they began their witnessing, speaking in the temple and in other public places, and daily winning converts (Acts 2 : 46, 47). **And in all Judæa and Samaria.** Persecution in Jerusalem drove the disciples out into Judæa and even into Samaria to the north (Acts 8 : 1).

*Illustration.* "It is calculated that the sporadic missionary efforts of the eighteenth century produced 70,000 converts. Warneck estimates that as a result of the nineteenth century there are 11,000,000 Christians won from heathendom. If we may work out a proportion: as 70,000 is to 11,000,000, so is 11,000,000, to 1,650,000,000; that is the probable population of the globe in the year 2000 A.D. Yes, all the kingdoms of the earth under the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. That is assuredly his design. In a little island of the Southern Seas, Aneityum, there is the grave of the missionary, John Geddes, and an epitaph: 'When he came in 1848 there was not a Christian; when he left in 1872 there was not a single heathen.' So it will be said of this island planet in the ocean of the universe which was visited by the Divine Missionary: 'When he came, there was not a Christian in it; when he left it, there was not a heathen.'" — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

**And unto the uttermost part of the earth.** To-day we see an approximate realization of the fulfilment of this command. Christian missions have at least made a beginning in every land under the sun, and in many parts of the earth they are far advanced. "The world has become small. Modern science has made the whole round world one small neighborhood. As Dr. Josiah Strong put it, 'Steam and electricity have mightily compressed the earth: the elbows of the nations touch.' We have all been shoved together into nearness of relationship, and these relationships bring responsibility." — *Rev. Daniel Shepardson, Jr.* A Godless nation, however distant it would once have seemed, is now a menace to the civilized world, and Christendom is vitally interested in transforming it to a Godly nation.

For the closing message of this lesson we may take the following words of Sherwood Eddy, spoken at the last session of the Student Volunteer convention of 1914:

"*God has a plan for your life. There is one place in this round world of need that will be a place of power and joy for you, and only one. Find that will of God, and, standing right with him, right with men, right with yourself, you have found the life of blessing. Miss it, and you will drag a lengthening chain through life.*"

## LESSON IX. — December 2.

## THE POWER OF THE EARLY CHURCH. — Acts 2 : 1—8 : 1.

**PRINT Acts 2 : 1-4, 37-42.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — ***Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*** — ACTS 2 : 21.

**Devotional Reading** : Joel 2 : 28-32.
**Primary Topic** : PETER TELLING ABOUT JESUS.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 2 : 1-12, 37-42.
**Memory Verse** : How shall they hear without a preacher ? Rom. 10 : 14.
**Junior Topic** : THREE THOUSAND CONVERTED IN ONE DAY.
**Lesson Material** : Acts 2 : 1-42. Print Acts 2 : 1-4, 37-42.
**Memory Verses** : Acts 2 : 38, 39.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : A BRAVE PREACHER AND A GREAT REVIVAL.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : THE SOURCE OF MISSIONARY POWER.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** will get the stirring account of Pentecost and its results. Try to burn the scene upon the memory of the boys and girls. Make the Holy Spirit a vivid reality to them. They will be moved by the story of Pentecost, and by the great change that came over Peter and all the apostles.

**The Older Classes** will study revivals, in this land and on mission fields. Discuss the doctrine of the Trinity and bring out its truth and its blessed meaning. Discuss also the means of obtaining revivals and how to have a revival all the time in individual lives and in the local church.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Pentecost, Sunday, May 28, A.D. 30.

**Place.** — Jerusalem.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Biblical proofs of the existence of the Trinity.
Revivals throughout the Bible.
Contrast the apostles' bearing before and after Pentecost.
What is conversion?
Pentecosts on the mission field.
How to live in a conversion Pentecost.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : The Source of Missionary Power.**

I. THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Acts 2 : 1-4.
- The wind and fire.
- Speaking with other tongues.

II. THE CONVERTING POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Acts 2 : 5-47.
- The audience.
- The sermon.
- The results.

III. THE STRENGTHENING POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Acts 3 : 1—8 : 1.
- Working miracles.
- Defying the authorities.
- A prayer of power.
- Splendid giving.
- Punishing evildoers.
- Freed from prison.
- Faithful unto death.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Gordon's *The Ministry of the Spirit.* Sitterly's *Jerusalem to Rome.* Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.* Vaughan's *The Church of the First Days.* McGiffert's *The Apostolic Age.* Walker's *The Gift of Tongues.* Wilson's *The Church We Forget.* Maclaren's *Expositions.* Geikie's *New Testament Hours.* Miller's *Devotional Hours with the Bible.* Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible.* Lowry's *The Work of the Holy Spirit.* Muspratt's *The Work and Power of the Holy Spirit.* Spurgeon's *The Work and Fruits of the Holy Spirit.* Swete's *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament.* Adamson's *The Spirit of Power.* Jowett's *The Transfigured Church.*

ACTS 2 : 1. And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place.

I. **THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** Acts 2 : 1-4. "The time of preparation is past and the day of the new dispensation is come. The number of the Twelve has been restored, the sense of unity has risen into complete control, and the one hundred and twenty souls await the fulfilment of the Master's promise with one mind. The advent of the Holy Spirit brings us to the main business of the book of Acts itself, which is to declare and set up the spiritual reign of God among men." — *Prof. Charles Fremont Sitterly.*

1. **And when the day of Pentecost was now come.** "We are not told that they

2. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
3. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them.
4. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

had any intimation that that day was to be to them *the* day, the day of spiritual baptism, the day of grace and apostleship, the day of spiritual ingathering into the communion and fellowship of the risen Lord. But, in the restrospect, we can see that it was a fit day." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.* Pentecost is the Greek word for *fiftieth.* "As the name indicates, this second of the great Jewish national festivals was observed on the fiftieth day, or seven weeks, from the Paschal Feast, and therefore in the Old Testament it was called 'the feast of weeks.' Every male in Israel was on that day required to appear before the Lord at the sanctuary. It was the first of the two agrarian festivals of Israel and signified the completion of the barley harvest which had begun at the time of the waving of the first ripe sheaf of the first-fruits. The wheat was then also nearly everywhere harvested, and the general character of the festival was that of a harvest-home celebration." — *Prof. Henry E. Dosker.* **They were all together in one place.** Probably about one hundred and twenty were there, and the place was probably the "upper room" of the Lord's Supper.

Audrian Van der Werff.
The Day of Pentecost.

2. **And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind.** Note that it is not said that there was a wind, but the supernatural sound was "as of" a great wind. "No doubt the potent but invisible wind seemed then, as in earlier times, the fittest symbol of the mysterious energy of the divine Spirit (John 3 : 7 f.; compare 1 Kings 19 : 11 f.; Job 38 : 1; Ps. 104 : 3; Ezek. 1 : 4." — *Prof. J. Vernon Bartlet.* **And it filled all the house where they were sitting.** It was heard in other rooms, and on the lower floor as well as the upper.

3. **And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire.** Not literal fire, but like fire in its brilliancy, perhaps also in its bursting forth and flaming upward. "Fire was an early and natural symbol of the energy and glory of the Divine, as in Ex. 3 : 2, where 'the angel of the Lord appeared' to Moses 'in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush'; and John the Baptist uses it (Matt. 3 : 11; Luke 3 : 16) figuratively, to describe one aspect (*i.e.* the purifying might) of the Holy Spirit power to go forth from Messiah." — *New Century Bible.* **And it sat upon each one of them.** There had evidently been a great central glowing body of light, which divided into many small portions, each of these coming to rest upon the head of a disciple. Thus was betokened their oneness in Christ and their individual use and enjoyment of the power of the Holy Spirit. "As would appear from verse 33, the tongues of fire remained lambently glowing on each head ('which ye see')." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

4. **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.** "That baptism with the Spirit

marked the beginning of the new dispensation, a dispensation which has had no end as yet. The history of the Christian Church began there at Pentecost, for the Christian Church is the church filled with the Spirit of God. Each of the three great forward movements in the history of the church in the Acts is marked by a notable outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. In Samaria Peter and John laid their hands upon the converts and they received the Holy Spirit. At Cæsarea Peter preached to Cornelius and his household, and the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word. No book in the Bible mentions the Holy Spirit as often as this book. There are fifty-seven direct references to his manifest presence ; and if we include allusions, he is mentioned some seventy-one times. The book could well be named The Acts of the Holy Spirit." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes.* **And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.** " Two general theories exist as to the nature of this gift of tongues : (1) The gift was manifested in ecstatic or elevated praise of God, but which was unintelligible to man. (2) The gift was manifested in intelligible discourse in tongues before unknown.' — *Davis's Bible Dictionary.* Probably both forms of the gift were exhibited at different times, or even combined on some occasions ; the manifestation at Pentecost seems clearly to have had the second character. " The ' speaking with tongues ' constituted, in the opinion of a large part of the church, the supreme act of worship, the act which gave the clearest evidence of the presence of the Spirit and of the speaker's peculiar nearness to his God. No other gift enjoyed by the early church so vividly reveals the inspired and enthusiastic character of primitive Christianity." — *Prof. A. C. McGiffert.* This event was clearly supernatural, though founded upon a power of the human mind to recall language impressions of the most casual nature. For striking examples of this see Walker's *The Gift of Tongues.*

RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT. " It seems clear from the Scriptures that it is still the duty and privilege of believers to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious, definite act of appropriating faith, just as they received Jesus Christ. We are required to appropriate the Spirit as sons, in the same way that we appropriated Christ as sinners." — *A. J. Gordon.*

" All Christians have the Holy Spirit. ' If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ' (Rom. 8 : 9). At the same time we must recognize the fact that to *have* the Spirit is one thing, but to be *filled* with the Spirit is quite another thing. If we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must want the blessing and want it earnestly, for the Holy Spirit will not fill unwilling hearts. But we have great encouragement to ask. He has promised, and he has repeatedly fulfilled his promise. We cannot ask more than he has already given in many lives.

" Did we dare
In our agony of prayer
Ask for more than he has done ?
When was ever his right hand
Over any time or land
Stretched as now beneath the sun? " — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

" The natural result of being filled with God's Spirit is utterance of the great truths of Christ's gospel. As surely as light radiates, as surely as any deep emotion demands expression, so certainly will a soul filled with the Spirit be forced to break into speech. If professing Christians have never known the impulse to tell of the Christ whom they have found, their religion must be very shallow and imperfect. If their spirits are full, they will overflow in speech." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

II. **THE CONVERTING POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, Acts 2 : 5-47. *The first effect* of the coming of the Holy Spirit was amazement. An immense number of Jews from other nations and speaking many languages was present in Jerusalem, and many of these, hearing the disciples speak with tongues, heard utterances in their own languages. " Where did these untaught Galileans get their knowledge of languages ? " they asked in wonder. *The second effect* was ridicule, at least on the part of those that did not understand what the disciples were saying and thought it mere gibberish. " They are drunk," was their charge. *The third effect* was Peter's courageous defence and bold statement of the facts concerning Christ, with an appeal to follow the crucified Messiah. Only seven weeks before, this apostle had denied his Lord ; now he dares to risk, for Christ's sake, the same shameful death which Christ had suffered. Here is indeed a proof that the Holy Spirit can fill men with power.

37. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?

38. And Peter *said* unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.

40. And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

37. **Now when they heard this.** Peter's sermon, exalting the crucified, risen Jesus as the long-expected Messiah, the Saviour of the world. **They were pricked in their heart.** Peter's sermon had ended with the words, "*whom ye crucified.*" Perhaps some of his hearers had been among the cruel mob who cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Probably all had spoken against him. Doubtless none of them had raised his voice to try to prevent the world's most terrible tragedy. No wonder they were smitten with remorse. **And said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles.** Peter is mentioned as the leader, and also as preacher of the sermon to which they had just listened; but the other apostles were not ignored. **Brethren, what shall we do?** "To escape the penalties which must fall on the nation that has so sinned against light and knowledge; who have had the true Light in their midst, but have comprehended it not, and have crucified the Lord of glory." — *Cambridge Bible.*

38. **And Peter said unto them, Repent ye.** Both John the Baptist and Christ emphasized repentance as the beginning of the new life (Mark 1 : 4, 15). Our Lord before his ascension had commanded his apostles to preach repentance (Luke 24 : 47). All preachers, evangelists, and missionaries find that in order to win souls to the Saviour they must first awaken in them a conviction of sin and of their need of a Saviour. **And be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.** Baptism also was commanded by Christ (Matt. 28 : 19), the outward expression following the inward experience. Peter does not name the Trinity in this connection, as Christ did, but he does introduce the Holy Spirit before the close of the sentence. The beautiful meaning of baptism is understood readily in all parts of the world and by men of all races and tribes. Baptism speaks of purification in a universal language. **Unto the remission of your sins.** The result is to be God's forgiveness of their sins, his remission of them, or sending of them away. The result is, as it were, the exile of sins, so that they can never come back. **And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** "The apostle does not necessarily promise startling and marvellous powers, but in some way they should all feel that a new Spirit was working in them, and that that Spirit was from God." — *Ellicott.* "We have in this short verse the summary of Christian doctrine as regards man and God: repentance and faith on the part of man; forgiveness of sins, or justification, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, or sanctification, on the part of God." — *Bishop Hervey.*

39. **For to you is the promise, and to your children.** The promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, to be their Comforter, Strengthener, and Enlightener. This promise was made by Christ (Acts 1 : 4; 2 : 33), and prophesied by Joel (Acts 2 : 17–21). In the light of this promise all missionaries, all Christian workers, live and move. Note that careful phrase, "and to your children." The Jews took heed for their children, and would have them go wherever they went. Blessedness for the fathers in which the children did not share was unthinkable to them. This is the thought that lies as a foundation beneath all our Sunday schools. **And to all that are afar off.** That is, to the Gentiles, those that are apparently very far from any promise made to God's children; see Eph. 2 : 17. The promise is also to all that are afar off in time, and includes us who live two thousand years later, and all that may believe to the end of time. And it is to those that are afar off in character, most sinful, least deserving of God's mercy. **Even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.** This is only an apparent limitation, for God is eager that all men everywhere shall repent and come to him. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. He that will, let him take the water of life freely." The missionary invitation is as wide as the world.

40. **And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them.** We must remember that we have here only a brief abstract of a part of this long and powerful

41. They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added *unto them* in that day about three thousand souls.

42. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

---

sermon, one of the most effective addresses in the history of the world. And it was spoken by a Galilean fisherman ! Is not this a wonderful proof of the power of the Holy Spirit ? **Saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.** This was the burden of the remainder of Peter's sermon. The Jewish nation, by its condemnation of Christ, had shown itself to be " crooked," wicked, headed for the ruin that was in fact to come upon it very soon. Wise men would see the impending destruction and get from under. Peter offered, in place of a falling kingdom, the enduring Kingdom of heaven. To every inquirer on the mission field the same exhortation is presented : " Your acquaintances, your friends, your relatives, are headed for death. Save yourselves from that disaster ; save them, too, if you can."

41. **They then that received his word were baptized.** To receive a man's word is not merely to receive it in the ears, but to welcome it in the heart and carry it out in the life. This was done by Peter's hearers in their baptism. **And there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.** " Added " to the one hundred and twenty which was the number of outspoken believers at the beginning of the day. The number of Christians was multiplied by twenty-five. If the number of Christians now in the world (counting the Catholics) were multiplied by only three the entire globe would become Christian ! " ' Greater works than mine shall ye do,' said Christ, ' because I go to the Father and send upon you the Spirit.' And now, at the very outset, closely following his ascension to the Father, three thousand souls gladly receive the glad tidings, are baptized, and enrolled as members of the infant church of Christ. An amazing fulfilment, too, of the word of Christ to the fisherman Peter, ' From henceforth thou shalt catch men.' " — *Rev. J. G. Butler, D.D.* " That so great a multitude, from the most widely separated countries, should have joined the new faith, and been admitted to its communion by its most solemn rite of initiation, was of signal moment, for it secured that Christ would be preached far and wide over the earth." — *Cunningham Geikie.*

*Illustration.* Pentecosts have often occurred on mission fields. A famous example is that of the Telugu country in India, to which John E. Clough was sent in 1865. He found only twenty-five converts in the entire great territory as the result of many years of work faithfully done before him. But a terrible famine came, and Clough was a civil engineer. He employed many thousands of the people upon a government canal, preaching Christ to them all the while. The people began to beg for baptism, but he refused it for months until the famine was over. They persisted in coming, however, and on July 3, 1878, after careful examination, 2,222 Telugu Christians were baptized in a single day. Nine thousand were received before the end of the year, and the largest Baptist church in Christendom was formed in that heathen land. The Pentecost continued. On December 28, 1890, there were baptized at one time 1,671 persons, and these converts proved themselves to be most devout and faithful Christians. During recent years India and China and other missionary lands have seen many Pentecosts, and there have been glorious ingatherings in the home lands following the work of powerful evangelists.

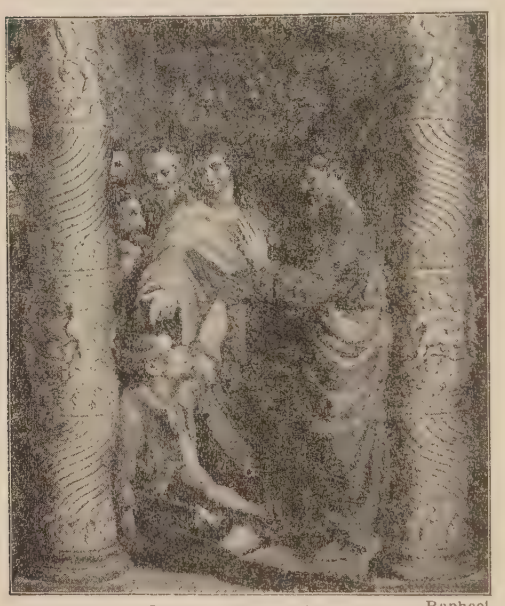
42. **And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship.** The teaching would include the full story of Christ's wonderful life and words, and the fellowship would include daily association, common worship, and the sharing of goods mentioned in vs. 44–46. **In the breaking of bread and the prayers.** " The ' breaking of bread,' so often alluded to by Luke, is undoubtedly an act of religion. It is an accompaniment of the meal in the house ; the bread was broken and divided to all as a symbol that all were parts of the whole, one fellowship, one Church, one Master. The common meal was thus a bond of union among the brotherhood." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.*

A CONTINUOUS REVIVAL. " The result of such beautiful Christian living was greatly increased numbers. ' The Lord added to them day by day.' That is the way a church should grow. The Lord added those who were added ; only the Lord can truly add souls to his church. Men's converts do not amount to anything, if that is all they are. There is no use in our urging people to join the church until they are first joined to Christ and have been renewed by his grace. We might as

well tie green branches to a bare pole, and think we have a living tree. It is interesting also to notice that the Lord added 'day by day.' Converts were not made merely at communion seasons or at revival times ; day by day men came to Christ and took him as their Master. In every true, living church there should be continuous revival." — *J. R. Miller.*

III. **THE STRENGTHENING POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, Acts 3 : 1—8 : 1. "So absolutely did these, his followers, believe that all power had been given to Christ, in heaven and earth ; so fully did they accept his word for it, that they preached, not only Christ the Redeemer, but Christ the Creator and Upholder of the Universe. . . . Wherever these men of the Spirit went there was clear, courageous speech, wise and far-sighted policy, righteous and terrible rebuke, patient and sympathetic teaching. In the Spirit they became statesmen, physicians, orators, theologians, organizers, and good citizens and neighbors. And that same Spirit is eternal, available for every age, every climate, every circumstance." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.*

1. The power of the Holy Spirit was first shown in the working of miracles. "Many wonders and signs were done through [not *by*] the apostles" (Acts 2 : 43). Especially are we told about the healing of the lame man by Peter, a miracle which filled all with amazement.



Peter at the Beautiful Gate. Raphael.

2. Another result was the continued preaching of Christ, especially by Peter.

3. A third result was the imprisonment, first of the leaders, Peter and John, and then of all the apostles, followed by the arraignment before the Sanhedrin, and their bold refusal to cease preaching Christ.

4. A fourth result was still another manifestation of the Spirit, by the shaking of the place where the disciples were praying, by a new access of the Spirit's power, and by the disciples' renewed boldness in speaking the word of God.

5. A fifth result was the brotherhood of the disciples in sharing their goods with all that were in need.

6. Still another result was the power of punishment, shown most strikingly in the deaths of the liars, Ananias and Sapphira.

7. Again, the Holy Spirit acted in releasing the apostles from prison, that they might continue their preaching.

8. Still further, the Spirit guided the apostles in the organization of the church by the appointment of deacons, "men full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."

9. The career of Stephen is another token of the Spirit's working. "They were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." And it is recorded that, as he suffered a martyr's death, "being full of the Holy Spirit" he "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

Thus through all the history of the Christian church its leaders have been strengthened and upheld by the Holy Spirit, and nowhere has this been more clearly manifest than on the mission field. The missionaries have preached and written with a wisdom that was not their own. They have endured trials and accomplished tasks with a strength that was not their own. The results of their work have been more than could be accounted for except by reckoning in this supernatural reinforcement. Missions are the Acts of the Apostles *Continued.*

OUT OF THE FRAME. "It is the Holy Spirit that changes the intellectual doctrine

of Christianity into the spiritual reality of a life, and we must not look for the results from any source, or by any other way, than through the indwelling, the filling, the fulfilling of the Holy Ghost in our lives. When I was crossing the sea a gentleman told me that his little boy was waiting for him over here in America. The father had been far away in the East, and over the cot in which the child slept hung his father's portrait. Every morning the child looked lovingly at it, and one day said to his mother, 'Mother, I wish father would come out from the frame.' Now, if we speak of Jesus as the portrait of the Father, the Holy Spirit is that portrait coming out of the frame and entering the heart, becoming a vital reality there." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

## LESSON X. — December 9.

## THE OUTREACH OF THE EARLY CHURCH. — Acts 8:1—15:35.

**PRINT Acts 8:4-8, 14-17, 25.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* — ACTS 1:8.

**Devotional Reading**: Ps. 96:1-8.
**Primary Topic**: PHILIP TELLING ABOUT JESUS.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 8:26-40.
**Memory Verse**: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. Mark 16:15.
**Junior Topic**: THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO SAMARIA.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 8:4-8, 14-17, 25.
**Memory Verse**: Acts 8:4.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: THE GOSPEL SPREAD THROUGH PERSECUTION.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: EXPANDING MISSIONARY VISION AND ACTIVITY.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will study the ever interesting story of Philip and the Ethiopian treasurer, and will learn from it lessons of Bible-reading, of obedience to God, and of trust in God. The sand-map may be used to render the story still more vivid.

**The Junior Classes** will study the work of Philip in Samaria and will begin to get some insight into home missions. Illustrate it with facts and anecdotes relating to the home-missionary work of your denomination.

**The Older Classes** will study the principles of church extension as illustrated by the eight chapters of Acts which are to be passed in rapid review. Eight members of the class may be chosen and the eight chapters divided among them, each to speak of the missionary lessons to be derived from the chapter by the church of to-day.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — The great persecution under Saul, A.D. 36. The conversion of Cornelius, A.D. 41. Paul's first missionary journey, A.D. 47-49.

**Place.** — Jerusalem, Samaria, Lydda, Joppa, Antioch, Cyprus, Asia Minor.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Gains from persecution.
Heroes of the early church.
Causes of growth in the early church.
Geographical lines along which the early church reached out.
Work of the Holy Spirit in the progress of the early church.
Lessons for the church of to-day in the progress of the early church.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: The Gospel Spread through Persecution.**

I. THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO SAMARIA, Acts 8:1-8.
Saul lays waste the church.
Philip in Samaria.
Miracles and rejoicing.

II. SAMARITANS RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, Acts 8:9-25.
Simon won to Christ.
Peter and John in Samaria.
The Spirit given in answer to prayer.

III. THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO ASIA MINOR, Acts 8:26—15:35.
Philip and the Ethiopian.
Saul's glorious conversion.

Peter in Lydda and Joppa.
Peter and Cornelius.
The gospel in Antioch.
The martyrdom of James.
Peter freed from prison.
Paul's first missionary journey.

**THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.**

Books on the early church mentioned in the last lesson. Burrell's *Hints and Helps on the Sunday School Lessons*. Simpson's *Sermons*. Phillips Brooks's *Sermons Preached in English Churches*. Hasell's *Bible Partings*. Gregg's *Things of Northfield*. George's *The Twelve*. Wilson's *The Church We Forget*.

ACTS 8: 4. They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

5. And Philip went down to the city of Să-mā′-rĭ-ȧ, and proclaimed unto them the Christ.

I. **THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO SAMARIA**, Acts 8 : 1–8. "The early Christians were not disposed to leave Jerusalem. They were huddled there in a goodly fellowship, rejoicing in their apprehension of a living Christ, having all things in common, and worshipping from house to house. Perhaps they were in a measure constrained by the lingering prejudice against the gathering in of the Gentiles. Perhaps they were simply content to let well enough alone, hesitating to reawaken by aggressive measures the slumbering passions of their enemies. Perhaps they felt, as some respectable churches seem to feel nowadays, that they had all they could do to take care of themselves. In any case they were lingering too long in Jerusalem, unmindful of the world lying in sin and waiting to be evangelized. The martyrdom of Stephen was the stirring up of the nest. The wisdom of the persecutor is always folly. Hoping to kill a feeble movement, he infuses new life into it. The followers of Christ pass out of their homes and banqueting chambers to begin the great propaganda. There may have been some among them who protested that they did not believe in foreign missions ; if so, they learned their lesson written in blood and fire. Providence made them all missionaries." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

4. **They therefore that were scattered abroad**. By the persecution that continued the martyrdom of Stephen and drove the disciples from Jerusalem. "There never was a time in which the ministrations of the church were more efficient than in the period that followed the martyrdom of Stephen. The persecution of the church became the means of sending missionaries over the earth. How God overrules the wrath of man and makes it to praise him ! God looks at all the machinations of men and laughs at the movements of evil-doers. He is carrying out his purposes, and whether it be by storm or sunshine, he is moving ; whether it be in the midst of the wrath or the smiles of men, his cause is going forward." — *Bishop Matthew Simpson.* **Went about preaching the word**. "The word" was the good news that the Messiah had come, had died, and had risen from the dead. "A Christian will be impelled to speak of Christ if his personal hold of Him is vital. He should need no ecclesiastical authorization for that. It is not every believer's duty to get into a pulpit, but it *is* his duty to preach Christ. The scattering of the disciples was meant by men to put out the fire, but, by God, to spread it. A volcanic explosion flings burning matter over a wide area." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

*Illustration.* Uniformly the missionaries of Christ have been attracted to the hardest mission fields. Adolphus C. Good was an instance. He applied to the board to be sent to the deadly West Coast of Africa, where the fever slew missionaries nearly as fast as they could be sent. He urged his sturdy health as the reason why he should be sent thither, and he went out in 1882. The first year of his stay ten missionaries were compelled to leave for home, and he was the only man left — and only twenty-six years old. He died at the age of thirty-eight, but during the intervening years he had done more good than an ordinary long life would accomplish.

5. **And Philip went down to the city of Samaria**. "That is, the principal city, which in ancient times bore the name 'Samaria' (1 Kings 16 : 24), but from the time of Augustus, who gave it to Herod the Great, called 'Sebaste' (*i.e. Augusta*). As this city was on the highway from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, which was Philip's home (Acts 21 : 8), it is probable that he was journeying thither." — *Prof. G. H. Gilbert.* Philip was one of the seven deacons, with Stephen, who were appointed to care for the material welfare of the infant church in Jerusalem. Therefore he was (Acts 6: 3) a man "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." "In all the world there was probably, at that moment, no city whose conditions were more unfavorable to Christian effort than Samaria. The people were half heathen at the best. Re-

6. And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did.

7. For *from* many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed.

jecting all of the Scriptures except the five books of Moses, they were addicted to all manner of superstitious observances. Just now they were under the spell of a certain necromancer, known to us as Simon Magus, who called himself 'the Great Power of God.' Under these circumstances a prudent evangelist might have thought best to pass on to more congenial soil. But Philip was not prudent on that wise. He followed the lead of Providence, the only safe plan." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.* **And proclaimed unto them the Christ.** "What a different world it would be, if it was true of Christians now that they 'went down into the city of So-and-So and proclaimed Christ'! Many run to and fro, but some of them leave their Christianity at home, or lock it up safely in their travelling trunks." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

6. **And the multitudes gave heed with one accord.** We are reminded of the eager hearing given to Jesus by the people of Sychar, only two or three hours' walk distant (John 4 : 1–41). Often in missionary work the response to Christian preaching is most encouraging in fields that have been regarded as most discouraging. We are to "sow beside all waters." **Unto the things that were spoken by Philip.** He gave the Christian message, reporting the words of Christ, telling of his wonderful works, and calling upon the people to repent of their sins and trust in Christ as their Saviour. **When they heard, and saw the signs which he did.** Christ had performed no miracles in the near-by Sychar, yet the people had acknowledged him to be the Saviour. No wonder that they listened favorably to Christ's preacher when he was accredited by miracles.

Philip Teaching. From an old print.

7. **For from many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out.** "Unclean spirits" were so called because they often led those afflicted with them into places where they would incur ceremonial defilement; for instance, into graveyards. **Crying with a loud voice.** "The cry may have been a testimony to the Messiahship of Christ (Mark 3 : 11; Luke 4 : 41), or an inarticulate shout of rage. It is to be noted that demoniac possession is clearly distinguished in this passage from ordinary disease." — *Prof. Thomas M. Lindsay, D.D.* **And many that were palsied.** "Paralysis and palsy are words used to express loss of the power of motion, a common symptom in diseases of the central nervous system. This condition is usually serious, and is generally fairly rapid in its onset, but slow in disappearing." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary.* **And that were lame, were healed.** Unable to walk from many causes, — falls, wounds, numerous diseases. But, whatever the varied causes, they were all healed.

8. And there was much joy in that city.

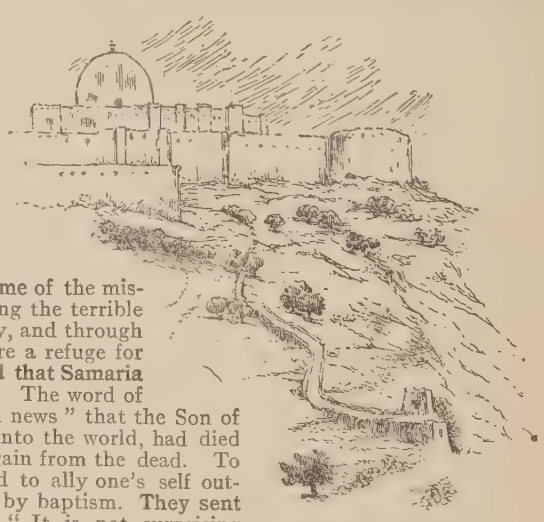
14. Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Sa-ma'-ri-a had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15. Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit:

8. **And there was much joy in that city.** Not only because of healed bodies, but also, far more, because of healed souls. "There is something clear and peculiar in this joy of a whole city over the new faith. We can all feel it when a thought or emotion which has lingered in a few minds starts up and takes possession of a whole community. It is as when a quiver of flame which has lurked about one bit of wood gets real possession of a heap of fuel, and the whole fireplace is in a blaze. A city as well as an individual is capable of a Christian experience and character. It is more than an aggregate of the experience of the souls within it, as a chemical compound has qualities which did not appear in either of its constituents; it is a real new being with qualities and powers of its own." — *Phillips Brooks.*

II. **SAMARITANS RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT.** Acts 8:9–25. Simon the Sorcerer is set off sharply against Philip the Evangelist, just as on mission fields the work of the native witch doctor or fakir is in strange contrast with that of the Christian missionary. Simon made large and vague claims for himself. He used magic arts, tricks that seemed wonderful to his credulous followers, and the Samaritans are said to have worshipped him as a god. But when he beheld Philip working real miracles where he had only accomplished tricks of legerdemain, he was astonished, professed belief in the Jesus whom Philip preached, and received baptism from Philip. His subsequent history shows that he was not yet a Christian in his heart, but his outward adhesion to the new faith must have helped many of the Samaritans to believe.

14. **Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem.** They had remained there while the disciples scattered out. "The disciples who fled were not necessarily less courageous than the apostles who remained, nor were the latter less prudent than the brethren who fled. For *noblesse oblige;* high position demands high virtues, and the officers should be the last to leave a wreck. The apostles, no doubt, felt it right to hold together, and preserve a center to which the others might return when the storm had blown itself out." — *Alexander Maclaren.* Thus some of the missionaries remained behind during the terrible Armenian massacres in Turkey, and through all those awful scenes they were a refuge for the persecuted people. **Heard that Samaria had received the word of God.** The word of God was the gospel, the "good news" that the Son of God, "the Word," had come into the world, had died for men's sins, and had risen again from the dead. To receive it was to believe it and to ally one's self outwardly with Christ's believers by baptism. **They sent unto them Peter and John.** "It is not surprising that the apostles, when they heard that Samaria had received the word of God, should send a deputation to the place where the good work had begun; not because Philip was only a deacon, for he was more; or because they doubted the sincerity or depth of the Samaritan conversions; or to show that the apostles, though this work began without them, still retained their old position; but because they were the constituted organizers of the church, and as such not only authorized but bound to enter every open door, whoever might have opened it." — *Rev. J. Addison Alexander, D.D.*



The Road to Jerusalem.

15. **Who, when they were come down.** Jerusalem was on high land and was the

16. For as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

17. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

chief city of Palestine ; for both reasons travellers were said to go *down* from it. **Prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit.** " John *once* would have called down destroying fire upon the Samaritans (Luke 9 : 54). Now he gladly seeks to bring upon them the blessed baptism of fire from the Holy Ghost." — *Rev. J. G. Butler, D.D.* Had not Philip also raised this prayer ? Probably ; but, though he had faith enough to work miracles, he lacked faith for this greatest of all miracles, the bringing of the Holy Spirit into human lives.

16. **For as yet it was fallen upon none of them.** " It " (the King James version has " he ") refers to *the gift* of the Holy Spirit, or his *manifestation*. No one that has received the Holy Spirit is in doubt. A peace, a joy, a power comes into his life that is so wonderful that it must be divine. The experience is different from any he has had before, and this experience had not come to the Samaritan converts. **Only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.** How many even to-day think that the formal entrance into the Christian church is enough, and do not press on to complete fellowship with God, the complete indwelling of God's Spirit ! They have entered the house, but they remain in the entrance hall.

Simon Magus. From an old print.
" He offered them money."

17. **Then laid they their hands on them.** " That there might be some outward sign of this imparted grace. So Ananias (Acts 9 : 17) laid his hands on Saul, and he received the Holy Spirit. But on Cornelius and his companions (Acts 10 : 44) the same gift was bestowed while Peter spake unto them." — *Cambridge Bible.* **And they received the Holy Spirit.** Perhaps the gift of tongues accompanied the coming of the Holy Spirit, or they were enabled to work miracles. There was probably some outward sign that Simon could appreciate, for he could neither perceive nor value the inward blessedness that came to them.

Simon's Mistake. Then Simon made one of the colossal blunders of history : he offered to buy the power to command the movements of the Holy Spirit of God ! Note that he did not ask that the apostles might lay hands on him, and obtain for him the presence of the Spirit ; he would pay money for the secret of the incantation or magic (as he thought it), so that he also might do the trick and win followers by it ! The proposition was close to the unpardonable sin, and it is no wonder that Peter's response was filled with horror. So terrifying were Peter's words, so earnest was his call to repentance, that Simon was filled with awe. He was in danger, it seemed, of some punishment that he did not realize, and he begged Peter to pray that the punishment might be withheld. He was not repentant, probably did not realize that he had done anything of which to repent ; but he was afraid, and with good reason. He has stood through all the centuries as a conspicuous example of the hardening effect of worldliness, of the love of money and power. It is indeed a sad thing when a

25. They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Să-măr'-ĭ-tănş.

soul gets into such a condition that high ideals and lofty experiences make no appeal to it, but only present themselves as possibilities of paltry gain!

25. **They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord.** They told what he had done for them, as an earnest of what he would do for the Samaritans. "This mission of Peter and John, their prayer, and the miraculous gifts, demonstrated the unity of the church. It suggested that there were real converts in Samaria, but also that they belonged to the same body as the believers in Jerusalem, and should recognize the leadership and official position of the apostles. Thus in all evangelistic work those who profess conversion should be examined by church officers and should be brought into the organized life of the church."—*Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* **Returned to Jerusalem.** "Peter and John had not been sent forth to make an extended missionary journey, but only to confirm the work of the evangelists who had first preached and baptized in Samaria, by laying their hands upon the converts."—*Cambridge Bible.* **And preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.** "Their recent experience had probably given them a new sense of obligation to these people, and they, apostles though they were, became, through Philip's example, evangelists to the Samaritans."—*Prof. George H. Gilbert, Ph.D.*

Philip's Fountain.
Supposed site of the baptism of the Ethiopian treasurer.

III. **THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO ASIA MINOR,** Acts 8:26—15:35. The Christian church is always an expanding church. As it reaches out into new territory it maintains its hold there, and from the new territory seeks for still further conquests. It is never content with its achievements, because its Master is never content. Now we are to watch the outreaching of the early church into Asia Minor.

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN. One of the chosen agents of the outreaching of the early church was Philip, who under supernatural guidance went from Samaria to the road which led from Jerusalem southward through Hebron to the ancient Philistine city of Gaza, which had been destroyed by Alexander but afterwards rebuilt. On that road Philip overtook the treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians (the African region south of Egypt now spoken of as Nubia and Abyssinia). He was a thoughtful man, evidently a proselyte to Judaism, and as he sat in his chariot and rode along he was reading Isaiah, and perplexed over the meaning. Philip was moved by the Spirit to enter into conversation with this influential man, and it was easy to pass from a discussion of Isaiah's Messianic prophecies to a statement of the life and claims of Jesus Christ. This was so earnest and convincing that the Ethiopian asked for baptism, received it, and returned to his far-off land rejoicing in Christ and ready to establish the gospel in his country. Abyssinia is the only portion of Africa which has been a Christian land from that day to this.

This incident "seems to teach us in how short a time a great spiritual work may be

accomplished. Certainly in this case the soil was well prepared. Diligent reading of God's Word, reverential worship in his house, and, doubtless, earnest prayers for his direction, had made the Ethiopian stranger ready to hear and believe the gospel. Those who resemble him in these things, and who are in need of more light, often receive it in strange and unexpected ways : from a chance word they overhear, — perhaps not specially meant for them; from a conversation with someone into whose company they are thrown for an hour, and whose very name is perhaps unknown to them ; or from a sermon which perhaps to other listeners seems marked by no great ability." — *E. J. Hasell.*

Saul's Glorious Conversion. The next step in the outreach of the early church was the conversion of the man who was to be Christ's chief agent in extending his kingdom. It was a double victory, removing the chief persecutor of the church and winning its chief promoter. It was a supernatural event. God's action in it was seen in the great light on the Damascus road, the mysterious voice, the message to Ananias, and the miracle by which Ananias cured, at least partially, Saul's blindness. It was a forward looking event, containing within itself the clear prophecy of Saul's missionary future. One of the most dramatic events of all history, it was also full of instruction and inspiration. The story of missions in all lands is crowded with conversions as wonderful in their surprising transformations and as convincing in their revelation of God's power as the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

Saul's Conversion. Julius von Schnorr.

Peter in Lydda and Joppa. But Peter was the head of the church in Jerusalem, a man of great vigor but also of great conservatism. If Paul was to extend the church among the Gentiles, Peter must be brought to sympathize with such an undertaking, and the way this was brought about is one of the most remarkable examples of God's leading in the affairs of men. First Peter was brought close to God by two miracles in which he exhibited the divine mercy, the healing of Æneas, the cripple of Lydda, and the raising from the dead of Dorcas, the beloved Christian worker of Joppa. Thus Peter was led farther and farther afield, and thus the missionary impulse, which is the spirit of helpfulness, was aroused in him.

Peter and Cornelius. Peter was further prepared for his enlargement of sympathies by the great vision of the sheet let down from heaven, and the command to take from it all kinds of clean and unclean animals and eat them. That Peter responded so readily to the summons to visit Cornelius, the Roman centurion, that he made the journey to Cæsarea, that he incurred ceremonial defilement by associating with a Roman, and that he so gladly baptized Cornelius into the Christian church, shows that the apostle had laid aside his prejudices and would raise no objection to Paul's work among the Gentiles. Especially was this true when Peter found his acts sealed by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his household. How could Peter disapprove what God so plainly favored ?

The Gospel in Antioch. The most conspicuous gain that came from the persecution that followed the martydom of Stephen was the scattering of the disciples from Jerusalem as far westward as the island of Cyprus and as far northward as the great city of Antioch in Asia Minor. A secondary gain was the beginning, in Antioch, of the preaching to others than Jews ; for the Christians were fired by their suffer-

ings with missionary zeal. They had a gospel for which they were ready to die; should they not be ready to speak of it? Another gain was the introduction of Barnabas and Saul to active evangelism, and their partnership in Antioch. A third gain was the invention of the name "Christian," and forcing it on the new religion. These were all genuine enlargements, and they all sprang from persecution.

"Look at the church of those converting times! It was filled with the Spirit. It was unworldly. It was daily at work. It spared no sacrifice. It went through the world with the open Book in its hand. It preached that man was lost and that Christ came to seek and to save the lost. It gave itself up to soul-saving, and allowed nothing else to distract its attention or use up its time and power. It sought to save, and it did save. In the reception and treatment of the Holy Spirit, in the representation of Jesus the Master, in its desire to save and its efforts to save, it was up to par and above par. When the church is up to par and above par, there are conversions." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.*

The Martyrdom of James. Herod Agrippa I. was a nephew of the Herod Antipas who killed John the Baptist and presided over one of Christ's trials. He showed the bad Herod blood when he put to death the apostle James, the brother of John, who, with John and Peter, formed the inner circles of the Twelve, nearest to the Saviour. This first of the apostles to win the glorious crown of martyrdom shared with his brother John the name of Sons of Thunder because of their impetuosity and the violence of their wrath. He was ambitious to rank high in Christ's coming kingdom. Perhaps it was this outreaching, aggressive nature of his that led to his arrest and execution. "It was not a random choice. James was a picked man. He had been uncompromising in the declaration of his principles. It is such a man that persecution selects to be a glaring example, no half-hearted advocate, but one who avows his faith with his whole soul. James did not stand in the background in citizen's clothes, he wore the uniform, he bore the colors, his Christianity was visible, he was a glittering mark. When Herod saw that the execution of James pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Peter was chosen not as the first, but only as the second victim. It would seem that the zeal of James had surpassed even that of impetuous Peter. . . . There is a tradition that the accuser of James, converted by his testimony and courage at the end, acknowledged Christ and was beheaded with him. So are men always moved by downright earnestness, and so will they be drawn to the Lord to-day, if Christianity is audible, visible, fired by holy zeal." — *Edward Augustus George.*

Peter Freed from Prison. The deliverance of Peter from Herod's prison was a conspicuous instance of answered prayer. It was the united and ceaseless prayer of the whole church. To such prayer all things are possible. Missionaries feel this. They are constantly telling the churches at home that, though there is great and urgent need of more men and more money for missions, there is far greater need of more prayers.

The miracle of Peter's deliverance was not granted to perfect prayers, but to prayers so faulty that when they were answered the Christians would not believe it. They scouted Rhoda, and they let Peter stand outside knocking. "The one plain fact was that Peter kept on knocking. Every one in the house, whatever his theory of miracles, could hear those resounding blows. They have not yet ceased. After the lapse of centuries, Peter insists upon escaping from the prison of neglect and oblivion and making himself and God's goodness to him known among all men. On the one hand, his tale sounds ridiculous. On the other hand, his knuckles are actual. You leave Peter outside in the dark, unseen, his cloak around him, but you do not get rid either of him or of his message." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.*

The First Missionary Journey. The first missionary enterprise is crowded with missionary teachings. It was born of prayer and of the Holy Spirit. It was a partnership, and not a solitary undertaking. It began where Barnabas, at least, was at home, and stretched out into unknown regions. It was bold of spirit and courageous in action. It was wisely conciliatory, and sought to win the Jews before going to the Gentiles. It faced perils of sickness, of wild beasts, of mountain torrents, of savage men. It made no terms with idolatry. It looked death steadily in the eye It was persevering, and went back over its route to do the work thoroughly. Not only were Paul and Barnabas the first missionaries, they laid out the work for their successors so wisely that none of them have been able to improve upon their plans The outreach of the church through all ages has proceeded along the lines of the church's pioneer missionaries.

## LESSON XI.— December 16.

## WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS. — Acts 16:1—28:31; Romans 15:18–21; Ephesians 3:2–9.

**PRINT Acts 16:9–15; 28:30, 31; Rom. 15:18–21.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* — ROM. 1:16.

**Devotional Reading**: Rom. 10:8–15.
**Primary Topic**: PREACHING BY A RIVERSIDE.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 16:9–15.
**Memory Verse**: Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16:31.
**Junior Topic**: PAUL CROSSES THE SEA.
**Lesson Material**: Acts 16:9–15; Rom. 15:18–21.
**Memory Verse**: Acts 16:9.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic**: PAUL'S AMBITION.
**Topic for Young People and Adults**: PAUL'S AIM AND METHOD.

### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Younger Classes** center their attention on the fascinating story of Paul's vision and its results in the entrance of Europe. Use an outline map, coloring Asia yellow and Europe green. Yellow is the color of age and green of youth. Try to get the pupils to see something of what it meant for Paul, two thousand years ago, to leave the continent of India and China, of Tibet and Persia and Arabia and Turkey, the continent where the nations through all these centuries have been unprogressive and asleep, and cross into the continent of Greece and Italy, of France and Germany, of Spain and Scandinavia and Great Britain.

**The Older Classes** will make this a study of God's providence in guiding the course of his church, and of God's purpose for the church of the future. Dividing the hour into two parts, you may place two members of the class in charge to lead discussions of these two subjects. The aim of the lesson is to inspire the class with a holy ambition to do their share in the vast and glorious work of winning the world for Christ.

### THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Paul enters Europe, spring of A.D. 50. Beginning of Paul's third missionary tour, A.D. 53. Paul's three years at Ephesus, A.D. 53–56. Paul mobbed in Jerusalem, A.D. 57. Paul's two-year imprisonment in Cæsarea, A.D. 58, 59. Paul reaches Rome, spring of A.D. 60.

**Place.** — Troas, Philippi, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Rome.

### THE ROUND TABLE.

**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The result if Paul had turned eastward instead of westward.
Macedonian calls of to-day.
Paul's fundamental aim in his work.
Providence in Paul's life.
Why Christianity seeks the cities.
The present-day Christian efforts to win the world.

### THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT: Paul's Ambition That Should Be Ours.**

I. THE GOSPEL REACHES EUROPE, Acts 16:1—19:41.
The Macedonian call.
From city to city.

II. THE GOSPEL REACHES ROME, Acts 20:1—28:31.
The leadings of God's providence.
Preaching in prison.

III. THE WORLD-WIDE AIM OF THE GOSPEL, Rom. 15:18–21; Eph. 3:2–9.
The unsearchable riches of Christ.
Building on new foundations.

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Banks's *Hero Tales from Sacred Story*. Furneaux's *Acts*. Fouard's *St. Paul and His Missions*. Johnston's *St. Paul and His Mission to the Roman Empire*. Wells's *Into All the World*. Smith's *Life and Letters of St. Paul*. Burrell's *Paul's Campaigns*. Merivale's *St. Paul at Rome*. Gore's *Ephesians*. Hodge's *Romans*. F. B. Meyer's *Paul*. On Lydia, *Adeney's Women of the New Testament*, Martyn's *Women of the Bible*, Hastings's *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, Sangster's *The Women of the Bible*, Wells's *Bible Miniatures*.

Acts 16:9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å, and help us.

10. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-å, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

I. **THE GOSPEL REACHES EUROPE**, Acts 16:1—19:41. The Second Missionary Journey. Paul's second missionary journey was the most momentous of the three because it added a new continent, the continent of progress, to the domain of the church. It made Christianity not an Oriental religion, according to the land of its birth, but an Occidental religion, according to the lands of its adoption. Strongly established in the West, it is now returning to become once more at home in the East.

This second missionary journey started in a disagreement over Mark, which, though it resulted in the separation of Paul and Barnabas, added Silas and Timothy to Paul's company, and doubled the number of missionary parties at work, with a doubling of the regions to be evangelized. A similar result has sprung from the denominational divisions of Protestantism.

The second missionary journey reviewed Paul's former progress through Asia Minor, taking the cities in the reverse order. It was marked also by barriers set up by the Holy Spirit, preventing the missionaries from going where they had intended, and bringing them to the northwest corner of Asia Minor, facing the gateway to Europe. It was a clear leading of providence, though they probably did not recognize it as such at the time. Probably there is not a mission in the world, or a missionary, that cannot testify to just such leadings, closing doors on one side and another, that activity may be forced out along the line of God's wise choice. It is glorious to be thus guided, and the missionary of all men enjoys this sense of divine direction.

It was here, at Troas, as Paul was doubtless perplexed over his future course, that God sent him an unmistakable message, one that has been the synonym for missionary guidance ever since.

Acts 16:9. **And a vision appeared to Paul in the night.** "Paul was one of those sensitive men to whom it is possible to convey truth in many ways. Some people seem to have only one way to knowledge. It is hard for them to believe anything that they do not see. But John Bunyan, who had a remarkable knowledge of human nature, represents Man-soul as having Feel-gate, Nose-gate, Mouth-gate, and Ear-gate as well as Eye-gate. Paul had a vivid imagination into which it was possible for truth to come when there was no other way to reach the mind and heart. People who leave the imagination out of their theory of life leave out one of the most effective factors not only for strange and unusual people, but one of the mightiest forces in universal life." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.* Nothing in all Paul's life was more real than this vision, and nothing in the world is more substantial than the glorious visions that impel the missionaries of to-day out into the needy places of the world. **There was a man of Macedonia standing.** Some think that this "man of Macedonia" was Luke, the author of the Acts and of the third Gospel, who was with Paul at the time and who had probably been talking to him about the need of the gospel in Macedonia. Luke seems to have been living in Philippi at this time. **Beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.** "Help" is a fundamental word in missions: help us out of our superstitions, our fear, our ignorance, our poverty, our sickness, our wretchedness; help us out of our temptations, our degradation, our sins; help us to Christ, to the Teacher, the Healer, the Friend, the Saviour; help us out of hell and into heaven. This is the cry that is heard by the missionaries, and by their supporters at home.

"The Spirit of Jesus waits to be to you, O pilgrim, what he was to Paul. Only be careful to obey his least prohibitions; and where, after believing prayer, there are no apparent hindrances, believe that you are on the way everlasting, and go forward with enlarged heart. 'Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.' Do not be surprised if the answer comes in closed doors. But when doors are shut right and left, an open road is seen to lead to Troas. There Luke awaits, and visions will point the way, where vast opportunities stand open, and faithful friends are waiting." — *F. B. Meyer.*

10. **And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into**

11. Setting sail therefore from Trō′-ăs, we made a straight course to Săm′-ŏ-thrāce, and the day following to Nĕ-ăp′-ŏ-lĭs;

12. And from thence to Phĭ-lĭp′-pī, which is a city of Măç-ĕ-dō′-nĭ-à, the first of the district, a *Roman* colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

13. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14. And a certain woman named Lŷd′-ĭ-à, a seller of purple, of the city of Thȳ-ă-tī′-rà, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

---

**Macedonia**. The " we " indicates that Luke was one of the party. The " straightway " indicates the eagerness and promptness of their obedience to " the heavenly vision." The seeking involved inquiries in the port for the next vessel to sail in the right direction. **Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.** The participle implies that they had given the matter careful thought, they had not jumped at conclusions. " Us " shows that Luke was a preacher as well as Paul; Timothy also had a wonderful and convincing story to tell, and doubtless gave his experience.

11. **Setting sail therefore from Troas.** Troas was Troy, the ancient city celebrated by Homer in the *Iliad*. **We made a straight course to Samothrace.** An island in the northern part of the Ægean Sea. **And the day following to Neapolis.** " New City," our " Newton," the same word as " Naples." Neapolis (probably the modern Kavalla) was the seaport of Philippi.

12. **And from thence to Philippi.** Named after Philip II., king of Macedon, who greatly enlarged and strengthened the city, and used the silver and gold mines near by in promoting his ambitions. In B.C. 42 Octavian won here (with Antony) the victory over Brutus and Cassius which made him the Emperor Augustus. **Which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony.** Macedonia was the country north of Greece. A Roman colony was settled by people sent out from Rome under orders. They remained Roman citizens, and their city, however distant from the capital of the empire, was regarded as a part of Rome. Augustus made Philippi a Roman colony in memory of his victory there. **And we were in this city tarrying certain days.** Looking over the ground, becoming acquainted, deciding how to begin their campaign wisely. No work gains from haste.

13. **And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side.** Probably the Gargites is meant, for it flows a mile west of the city. **Where we supposed there was a place of prayer.** There were not enough Jews in Philippi to support a synagogue, but under such circumstances it was common to establish a " prayer-place " in the open air. The frequent ceremonial ablutions of the Jews required that this " prayer-place " be by some body of water. **And we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.** A Greek philosopher or a Jewish rabbi would probably think it far beneath his dignity to teach women; but Christianity has changed that foolish idea, and placed woman by the side of man as his equal and comrade. In mission lands " women's work for women " is abundantly fruitful.

14. **And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple.** Her home town was in Lydia, a province of Asia Minor, which may have given her her name. She dealt in purple-dyed cloth, which was highly esteemed, and she evidently had a flourishing trade, and was a very capable business woman. " Lydia was one who combined the virtue of practical common sense with the virtues of a generous heart and an open mind. She was not ashamed to work for her living. She was not one of those women who consider a life of languid idleness to be the most enjoyable kind of existence. She followed an honest trade, and apparently was a person of considerable independence of spirit." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.* **Of the city of Thyatira.** This city was a center of the dyeing industry. **One that worshipped God, heard us.** She was a Jewish proselyte; she had gone as far as she had light to go, and now that she had more light she was glad to go farther. " She was one of the ' devout ' from among whom so many of the early Christians were drawn, one of those who, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, received the benediction of which Jesus spoke in at-

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

taining at length to the new righteousness that he brought into the world." — *Prof. Walter F. Adeney.* **Whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.** Note the absence of hero-worship on the part of Luke. The words were Paul's, but the convincing power was the Lord's. Note also the simplicity and evident truthfulness of the account. Only an honest narrator would have introduced his story with a wonderful vision, followed by a long voyage, and ending merely in the conversion of — a woman ! We honor women in all ways, but only a genuine historian would have done such honor to a woman in Luke's day. "Is there not in this a lesson for any one who to-day, hearing the same wonderful story, hesitates about accepting Christ and lingers in the cold and shadowy atmosphere of scepticism ? Whatever you are, when you hear the gospel story, listen to it with an open mind." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

15. **And when she was baptized, and her household.** A woman of her position would have a large house and many servants. "Purple was a costly dye, and she was probably a rich woman." — *Furneaux.* It is characteristic of converts on all mission fields that they seek to bring to Christ all in their houses, and often they learn the truth of Christ's prophecy, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10 : 36). Lydia, however, was a woman of influence at home as well as abroad. **She besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord.** "Her first inquiry seems to have been, in what way she could best manifest her love and gratitude to Him who had bought her with his blood. The answer was plain. There were his dear servants, poor in this world's goods and strangers in a strange city, and kindness extended to them would surely be regarded by their gracious Master as shown to himself." — *Mrs. S. T. Martyn.* Lydia did not offer her hospitality as a boon which they should be proud and happy to accept, but as a favor for which she petitioned, giving arguments why it should be granted. She had insight enough to know that in entertaining these strangers she was "entertaining angels" (Heb. 13 : 2). **Come into my house, and abide there.** "Like the two disciples who followed Jesus (John 1 : 38) Lydia was anxious to have the teachers, whose lessons she found so suited to the needs of her opened heart, near unto her." — *Cambridge Bible.* **And she constrained us.** "Constrained" is an unusual word in the Greek, used only by Luke, and by him only here and in Luke 24 : 29, where the two from Emmaus urge the risen Lord to enter their house. "It is clear that Paul demurred at first, and his acceptance of her hospitality was, so far as we know, a unique act on his part. He prized his independence too dearly to accept maintenance from his converts. But he probably felt that invaluable service might be rendered to the gospel by these Macedonian women, who occupied a position of respect and freedom unknown in his experience of the women of Syria and Palestine." — *Fouard.* "The fact that he accepted hospitality at Philippi and was compelled to work for his livelihood at Thessalonica (2 Thess. 3:8) shows that he had crossed the sea from Troas without funds for a sojourn in Europe. He had never contemplated such distant work when he departed from Antioch." — *C. N. Johnston.*

"I know not what awaits me,
God kindly veils my eyes,
And o'er each step of my onward way
He makes new scenes to rise;
And every joy he sends me, comes
A sweet and glad surprise.

"And so I go on not knowing,
I would not if I might;
I'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk by faith with him
Than go alone by sight." — *Mary G. Brainard.*

HOW THE GOSPEL SPREAD THROUGH GREECE. 1. *It spread through persecution.* In this second missionary trip, and in Philippi, the very first city visited, Paul and Silas were imprisoned ; yet the church that grew up in Philippi was one of the strongest in the Roman empire. In Thessalonica such an outcry was made against the gospel that Paul and his party had to leave the city by night ; yet the Thessalonian

church also was a strong one. In Corinth, where the Christians were to become so numerous and influential, Paul needed the encouragement of another vision promising that no man should hurt him, and finally was brought into court. From Ephesus, after a long and peculiarly beneficent ministry, Paul departed because of a mob incited by the makers of heathen shrines; yet the church in Ephesus vied with the other churches named in power and efficiency. At Athens, on the other hand, Paul was not persecuted, and we read of no church in Athens.

Thus also through the long history of missions persecution has been like the breath of life to Christianity. It was thus, for instance, in Madagascar when, in 1835, the missionaries were driven from the island after they had hastily completed their translation of the Bible. "A noble young woman, Rasalama, was the first martyr, a spear being thrust through her as she prayed. From sixty to eighty others were also slain. In 1849 fourteen Christians were lowered, one by one, over the 'Rock of Hurling,' a precipice of 150 feet in Antananarivo, the capital. 'Will you give up praying?' each was asked; and when he answered, 'No,' the rope was cut and the faithful witness was dashed to pieces far below. One was heard singing as he fell. Others were burned to death, others stoned, or killed by boiling water, or by the horrible tangena poison. Four nobles had just endured a fiery martyrdom when rain quenched the flames, and the awe-struck multitude saw a beautiful rainbow springing from the spot. For a quarter of a century the persecution continued, but in spite of it all, our Saviour won men's hearts so that on the return of the missionaries they found nearly four times as many Christians as they had left in the entire island." — *Amos R. Wells's "Into All the World."*

2. *It spread through Bible-study.* We are not to suppose that the Christians of Berœa who "searched the scriptures daily" were the only ones that did so. When Paul spoke he "reasoned from the scriptures" (Acts 17 : 2), and built up his churches on the Bible. Always Christian missions have used the Bible as their foundation. Often, as in South America, the Bible colporteur goes ahead of the missionary for years or decades, making his swift journeys where the missionary would not be allowed to go and settle. And when missions are established the Bible woman, reading the Bible from house to house, is an invaluable aid to the work.

3. *It spread through prayer.* Paul's letters are eloquent testimony to his reliance on prayer, and to the habit of prayer which he encouraged in his converts. It was natural for Paul to kneel down on the seashore and pray with the Ephesian delegation (Acts 20 : 36), and to do the same on another beach with the Christians of Tyre. These early missionaries, like those of to-day, lived in an atmosphere of communion with God.

4. *It spread through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.* He showed his presence by miracles, when they were needed, as by the healing of the slave girl of Philippi, possessed by demons, and the bringing back of Eutychus to life. Mostly, however, he manifested himself in the mind and soul of his followers, telling them what to do and what not to do, and encouraging them in their Christian undertakings. Thus they could join with Paul in the glad assurance, "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2 : 16).

5. *It spread through the energy and perseverance of the Christians, and especially of Paul.* That wonderful man knew no rest. One missionary journey ended, he was off on another. He visited the cities of the Roman empire over and over, building up the churches which he had founded. His letters multiplied his influence still more widely. And his spirit was caught by the church at large, for it was a Pauline age. No wonder the number of Christians rapidly increased and Christ's name became a power in the world.

II. **THE GOSPEL REACHES ROME**, Acts 20 : 1—28 : 31. THE LEADINGS OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE. It is thrilling to note the way in which Paul adhered to his purpose to visit Jerusalem, though warned that imprisonment and possibly death awaited him there, and though he believed the warning. Paul set his face toward Jerusalem as determinedly as his Master had done on his way to crucifixion. He had the Gentile contribution to the Jerusalem poor to deliver, and he had his vow to perform in the temple. Must we not also believe that Paul was led thither by the Holy Spirit, that he might accomplish his long-desired purpose and visit Rome?

We can read the Holy Spirit's purpose in the Jewish riot which led to Paul's arrest by the Roman guard, and the Jewish plot which brought about his transfer to Cæsarea where for two years Luke had an opportunity to collect his priceless material, and the persistent hatred of the Jews which led Paul to appeal to Cæsar rather than go to

ACTS 28:30. And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him,

31. Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

Jerusalem to be tried, and the great storm which made clear the princely qualities of Paul, thus doubtless preparing for a good report of him to be made to the Roman authorities, and leading to the liberal measure of freedom given the apostolic prisoner for the doing of his work in Rome. It was, as was all of Paul's life, a marvellous illustration of the workings of God's providence.

ACTS 28 : 30. **And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling.** "On reaching Rome Julius marched his gang of prisoners to the *Castra Peregrinorum* on the Cælian Hill, and handed them over to the commander, the *Princeps Peregrinorum*. Paul, however, doubtless on the ground of the report of Festus and the testimony which Julius would bear to his behavior during the terrible voyage, was accorded a welcome privilege. He was allowed to reside outside the barracks, apparently in the house of some hospitable Christian (he presently removed to a rented lodging), in the enjoyment of comparative freedom. He was not indeed suffered to stir abroad, and he was linked by the wrist day and night to a military guard ; but his attendants, Luke and Aristarchus, might go where they would, and visitors had unrestrained access to him." — *Prof. David Smith, D.D.* "The apostle, though he had appealed to the emperor on the charges preferred against him at home, seems not to have been admitted to a hearing in the august presence. Perhaps the papers and witnesses required for the case had not arrived ; his accusers would, no doubt, make all possible delay if they thought it would be decided against them, while he was powerless himself to accelerate a decision in his favor." — *Dean Merivale.* **And received all that went in unto him.** "The chain on his right hand bound him to Christ. With what joyous pride he speaks of himself as 'the prisoner of Christ'! The same chain that bound Paul to his Lord bound him to one of the Roman guards, and he preached the gospel to that man. Not a few of his spiritual children were thus begotten in his bonds. The reason why he had longed to visit Rome was because it was a coign of vantage from which to sound forth the riches of grace. There were two millions of people there, all immortal souls!" — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

31. **Preaching the kingdom of God.** It consisted in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," such righteousness as Christ alone can establish on earth, such peace and joy as Christ alone can implant in the human heart and in the affairs of men. This preaching of a "kingdom" not his own was one that not even the Emperor of Rome could object to. **And teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.** By this time, through his own conversation with Peter and John and the others who had known Christ intimately, and through the researches conducted by Luke during the two years' stay at Cæsarea, Paul must have learned far more than we know about the words and deeds of the Redeemer. This knowledge he was eager to pass along to all whom he could reach. **With all boldness, none forbidding him.** "The word 'boldness' implies that 'freedom of speech' which was looked upon by the Athenians as the great mark of their liberty. For Englishmen there must arise the thought that perhaps from some of those Roman soldiers who heard Paul in his prison the message of the gospel came to our island." — *Prof. J. R. Lumby, D.D.* "All boldness" in our ordinary sense Paul always had, no matter how many or who might forbid his speaking. Such boldness has characterized the missionaries of the cross in all ages.

III. **THE WORLD-WIDE AIM OF THE GOSPEL**, Rom. 15 : 18–21 ; Eph. 3 : 2–9. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST. During Paul's first Roman imprisonment he wrote his incomparable letter to the Christians at Ephesus, where he had labored longer than in any other city. In the course of this letter (Eph. 3 : 8, 9) the apostle emphasizes his high commission ("this grace given") "to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," and "to make *all men* see" the mystery of divine redemption from sin through the Redeemer of mankind.

This is what missions have to give to the world : not healing of the body, though that is good ; not better ways of farming and the planting of new industries, though that is good ; not a widening of the intellectual horizon and an introduction to the great literatures of the world, though that is good ; not even a purer morality, just courts, the reform of social customs, though that is good ; but, with all these things

ROM. 15: 18. For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,

19. In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Ĭl-lȳr′-ĭ-cŭm, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;

and infinitely beyond them, the thing that reaches the deep places of the soul, the thing that lasts through eternity, the thing that underlies and pervades all other blessings so that without it they are nothing, — the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. This is what missionaries aim to make all men see. This is the unsearchable riches of Christ. For two thousand years men have been delving in it, and no one has ever reached the bottom of it. For two thousand years men have been ascending it, and no one has ever reached the top of it. For two thousand years men have journeyed through it and no one has ever reached its outmost bounds. Nor ever will.

Paul Urging His Guard to Accept Christ.

"And this 'world-wide distribution' of the tidings of such a mercy, what is it to do? It is to gather in a Church of believers out of universal man. And the work of that Church, what is it to be? A work of extension indeed!" — *Bishop Moule.*

"St. Paul conceives his function to be to 'make men see,' or 'bring into the light' a long-hidden secret of God now in part disclosed to the apostles, and to be by them disclosed to the world — in part, for its contents are still 'unsearchable.' Redemption interprets to angels and men what God's purpose in creation originally was. To minister to this disclosure is enough for any man. It makes all St. Paul's tribulations only such as it is worth while to bear." — *Bishop Gore.*

BUILDING ON NEW FOUNDATIONS. ROM. 15: 18. **For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me.** Paul is drawing to the close of this marvellous letter, and is afraid that some of the Roman Christians may think that he has written too authoritatively; therefore he gives, very modestly, some of his grounds for speaking to them as a leader with Christ back of him and working through him. Paul will dare to speak of his deeds because they are not his own really, but Christ's. **For the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed.** Paul's words, and the miracles which he occasionally wrought, had only one aim, that they might lead the Gentiles into obedience to Jesus Christ. That is the aim of all missionaries, because they know that in this obedience is peace and joy, purity and power.

19. **In the power of signs and wonders.** Both "signs" and "wonders" refer to miracles. It would seem from this that miracles played a larger part in Paul's ministry than we are informed of, and certainly Paul did not disregard them, but knew their power over the hearts of men. **In the power of the Holy Spirit.** The power of miracles was the power of the Holy Spirit; so was the power of the spoken and written word. All that Paul did for the advancement of Christ's kingdom was done through the Holy Spirit. All the work of Christian missions, at home and abroad, is the work of the Holy Spirit. **So that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum.** Illyricum was the region stretching along the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, and Paul had approached it after visiting thoroughly all the countries between it and Jerusalem. We do not know when he visited Illyricum;

20. Yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation;
21. But, as it is written, They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, and they who have not heard shall understand.

perhaps after his long ministry in Ephesus (Acts 20 : 1, 2). **I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.** " ' I have fully preached ' expresses, no doubt, the sense of the original, to bring the gospel (that is, the preaching of it) to an end, to accomplish it thoroughly : see Col. 1 : 25." — *Prof. Charles Hodge.* " Fully " seems here to refer to Paul's faithfulness in covering the ground *geographically*, but elsewhere (Acts 20 : 20, 27) we are assured of his fidelity in covering the ground *doctrinally*. Indeed, a Christian teacher is culpable in omitting Christian essentials quite as much as in teaching them falsely.

20. **Yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel.** Paul's was no haphazard religion ; it was *aimed*, it had direction, purpose. The reason why so many Christians accomplish nothing in particular is because they have nothing in particular which they seek to accomplish. **Not where Christ was already named.** Where Christ's name was taken upon themselves by those who had become his followers, places containing *Christians*. **That I might not build upon another man's foundation.** He would not go where Barnabas had founded churches, for instance, or where Apollos had been laboring. His practices might not agree with theirs in all points, and his different way of putting the same truth might lead to misapprehension and dissension.. Besides, the world was large, uncounted multitudes were not getting the gospel message, so why duplicate labors, and till an already-tilled field ? These same considerations have led the missionary societies to divide the fields and assign to each denomination its special missionary task.

21. **But, as it is written.** In Isa. 52: 15. In his eagerness Paul has omitted part of his evident thought : " I will not build on another man's foundation, but, on the contrary, I will work where I can obtain a verification of Isaiah's prophecy —." **They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came.** Isaiah is speaking of the Servant, that is, the Messiah, and of the time when he should be exalted from a low estate. This exaltation would bring him into the view of those who had not even heard of him in his humble condition. **And they who have not heard shall understand.** Peoples that have not even heard of Christ shall come to understand his majesty and beauty, and to accept him as their King.

A World-Seeking Religion. We see in Paul " *the splendor of a great ambition.* Paul was not content with anything less than the noblest and best. For one thing, he wanted to make the most of himself, and Rome was needed for the rounding out of his life. I like the prayer of the humble cobbler who used to ask every day, ' Lord, give me a good opinion of myself ' ; but such a prayer is vain without something worth while behind it. This is a responsibility which ought to rest upon the conscience of every one. The church would long ago have conquered the world were it not that so many are satisfied with being minimum Christians, inactive and indifferent, imbedded like flies in amber. Let us be our best and do our utmost for Him who has redeemed us by his precious blood. The words with which William Carey closed his great sermon inaugurating the modern campaign of missions strike an inspiring note for all earnest souls : ' *Let us undertake great things for God, and expect great things from him.*' " — *Rev. David James Burrell, D. D.*

## LESSON XII. — December 23.

## THE UNIVERSAL REIGN OF CHRIST. CHRISTMAS LESSON.

— Isaiah 9 : 6, 7 ; 11 : 1–10 ; Psalm 2 : 1–12.

**PRINT Isa. 11 : 1–10 ; Ps. 2 : 8.**

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* — Ps. 2 : 8.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 72 : 1–8.
Reference Material : Ps. 22 : 22–31 ; Isa. 2 : 2–4 ; 32 : 1–4 ; Dan. 2 : 44 ; Rev. 11 : 15.

**Primary Topic** : CHRIST THE PRINCE OF PEACE.
**Lesson Material** : Isa. 11 : 6–10.
**Story Material** : Luke 2 : 8–20.
**Memory Verse** : Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace. Luke 2 : 14.
**Junior Topic** : GOD'S PROMISE OF PEACE ON EARTH.
**Lesson Material** : Isa. 11 : 1–10.
**Memory Verse** : Isa. 11 : 9.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic** : CHRIST'S KINGDOM THE HOPE OF THE WORLD.
**Topic for Young People and Adults** : WHAT CHRIST'S REIGN MEANS TO THE WORLD.

## THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

**The Primary Classes** will hear the beautiful Christmas story in Luke, but will also learn of Isaiah's wonderful prophecy, and will compare it with Christ's life to see how true it was. The teacher will draw a Christmas star, and print upon it the names of the Messiah included in Isaiah's prophecy.

**The Older Classes** will talk about the meaning of Christmas, which involves a discussion of the meaning of Christianity to the world, and of the universal reign of Christ in the affairs of men. This is a most fitting climax of our quarter's missionary lessons. We are near enough to the Great War to know clearly that only Christianity can keep us from another and even worse calamity of the same kind. The matter of first importance to the world, from a secular as well as a religious viewpoint, is to bring about the universal reign of Christ.

## THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

**Time.** — Isaiah's call to prophesy (Isa. 6) is placed by Professor Beecher in B.C. 755 ; his death in B.C. 679.

**Place.** — Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

### FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Titles of Christ in the Bible.
Old Testament descriptions of Christ's kingdom.
New Testament descriptions of Christ's kingdom.
How missions are establishing Christ's kingdom.
The ultimate aim of missions.
How soon can missions reach their goal?

## THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

**SUBJECT : Christ's Kingdom the Hope of the World.**

I. THE RULER OF THE KINGDOM, Isa. 9 : 6.

The wonderful Child.
The Prince of Peace.

II. THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM, Isa. 11 : 1–5.

A kingdom of justice.
A kingdom of love.

III. THE EXTENT AND DURATION OF THE KINGDOM, Isa. 9 : 7 ; 11 : 6–10 ; Ps. 2 : 1–12.

"The earth shall be full."
"The uttermost parts of the earth."
"Of the increase of his government . . . no end."

## THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Maclaren's *Expositions*. Wesley's *Sermons*, No. 68. McKim's *The Gospel in the Christian Year*. Kingsley's *Westminster Sermons*. Phillips Brooks's *Seeking Life*. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible* (Isaiah). Cox's *Genesis of Evil*. Horton's *The Bible a Missionary Book*.

**I. THE RULER OF THE KINGDOM**, Isa. 9 : 6. We come now to the closing lesson of our missionary quarter, the climax of the twelve glorious lessons. It falls most appropriately on Christmas week, for Christ was the first missionary, infinitely greater than all the home and foreign missionaries that have followed him. He left heaven to take possession of his kingdom of this world. He began the work and left it for his followers to complete. For three months we have been studying this blessed task in various aspects — how men have taken hold of it, and what progress has been made. Our closing lesson is a bit of hope-inspiring prophecy from the great soul who foresaw most clearly the splendor of Messiah's reign. But first let us have Isaiah's portrait of the Ruler of the Kingdom.

The first feature of the immortal portrait is unexpected : this King of the world, who is to subdue all nations and reign over them, is a child. He is to be a Son of man : "unto *us* a son is given." At the same time he is to be divine, the Godhead himself; Mighty God, Everlasting Father. He is to assume all authority, taking the government of the world upon his shoulders. He is to be Wonderful, surprising, not of this world, as his kingdom is not of this world. Men are to marvel at him, and especially at his strange uniqueness. He is to be Counsellor, the All-wise, making no

ISA. 11 : 1. And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit.

2. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah.

---

mistakes in the conduct of his kingdom. He is to be everlasting, and his kingdom like himself is to endure forever. And the final feature of the portrait is most amazing of all ; for, in exact contrariety to all other rulers of world kingdoms, the Messiah is the Prince of Peace. *They* founded their kingdoms upon hatred and fear ; *he* established his kingdom on love and confidence. Could a better portrait of Christ be drawn, in all his humility and majesty, than this which was drawn by Isaiah seven centuries before Christ's coming ?

*Illustration.* The kings of Egypt and Babylonia assumed many proud and bombastic titles, calling themselves " Giver of life in perpetuity," " Ever-living, " " Lord of life," " Lord of eternity and infinity," etc. Such titles sound grotesque when applied to man, but mankind has never regarded the most tremendous claims, when made by and for Christ, as other than just and appropriate. No title is too large for him.

II. **THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM,** Isa. 11 : 1–5. Not only did Isaiah paint a wonderful portrait of the King, he drew an equally wonderful picture of the Kingdom. It is as surprising as the King's portrait, and different from the descriptions that could be made of any kingdom preceding it. And it is equally delightful and alluring.

1. **There shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse.** Jesse, the father of David, stands for the royal house of Judah, from which Christ was descended on the human side, thus fulfilling this prophecy. The stock is the stump of a tree that has been cut down, and the implication is that a great disaster will have befallen the royal house of Judah before the Messiah's coming to restore it. That disaster was the capture of Jerusalem and the exile of its inhabitants ; for, though Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah led back a portion of the Jews, and rebuilt the walls and the temple, it was still only a stump compared with the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon. But Jesus Christ has restored it to a splendor of which the Jews at their height of power only dreamed, seeing God-inspired visions of it. **And a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit.** The Messiah's kingdom is not to be unfinished, but is to go through the orderly stages of leaf and blossom and fruit, and is to be carried to completion. And what fruit it is bearing to-day wherever it is established — peace, intelligence, wealth, justice, hope for the future, and souls at one with God ! Ministers and missionaries tend this fruit, cherish it, protect it, give it out to mankind.

2. **And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him.** The coming King could never do the work he was to do with mere human powers and with a soul no greater than a man's. Nothing short of the Holy Spirit of Jehovah could equip him for his gigantic task, and therefore Isaiah saw that the Spirit would be given to him in fullest measure. **The spirit of wisdom and understanding.** The description of the Holy Spirit in his manifestation through the Messiah is in three pairs of qualities : intellectual, practical, religious. The first has to do with the mind : the innate wisdom, and the discernment of men and events, which a ruler most needs to carry on his difficult work. These the Messiah had. He spoke as never man spoke. He knew what was in man. He saw the future clearly, and related it before it came to pass. He bore with him the spirit of wisdom and understanding. **The spirit of counsel and might.** " ' Counsel ' is the faculty of adapting means to ends or of forming right resolutions ; ' might ' the energy necessary to carry them through." — *Cambridge Bible.* Christ used the slightest means — a handful of unlearned fishermen, no armies, no books, no ecclesiastical or governmental machinery ; yet such was his practical wisdom and efficiency that with these he has built up a world power such as no Cæsar or Alexander or Napoleon ever established. " This royal Spirit is described as ' the spirit of counsel and might,' that is, the spirit of prudence and practical power ; the spirit which sees how to deal with human beings, and has the practical power of making them obey. Now that power can only be got by loving human beings. There is nothing so blind as hardness, nothing so weak as violence. My experience is this : that whensoever in my past life I have been angry and scornful I have said or done an unwise thing ;

3. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears;

4. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

---

I have more or less injured my own cause, weakened my own influence over my fellow-men, repelled them instead of attracting them, made them rebel against me rather than obey me. By patience, courtesy, and gentleness we not only make ourselves stronger, we not only attract our fellow-men and make them help us and follow us willingly and joyfully, but we make ourselves wiser, we give ourselves time and light to see what we ought to do and how to do it." — *Charles Kingsley.* **The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah.** Knowledge of God and reverence for God sum up religion, as the Old Testament knew it; it remained for Christ to add the love of God, completing the trinity of aspects of religion.

3. **And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah.** Literally, his fragrance, the thing he inhales with pleasure as one inhales the scent of a rose. The Messiah shall find his chief joy in religious men. Christ's praise was reserved for faith, such faith as the centurion showed in bidding Christ work a miracle from a distance, or such faith as Peter showed in hailing him as the Messiah. **And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,** etc. Human judges are dependent for judgments on what they see and hear, but actions and words are often deceptive, so that human judges often err in their decisions. But the Messiah will have direct and immediate insight into human hearts; he will go far deeper than words and acts, and will perceive and thoroughly understand character and motives. Therefore he will make no mistake; Christ's judgments of men are infallible.

4. **But with righteousness shall he judge the poor.** Isaiah does not look forward to a time, even in the Messiah's reign, when there shall be no more poor. "The poor ye have always with you," said Christ. But he did anticipate a time when their poverty should be ameliorated by the righteousness of their Ruler. Christ will not arbitrarily reduce all men to the same level of ability and therefore of wealth, but he will raise all men to the same level of safety and justice. There will be no respect of persons in his court. In his first sermon at Nazareth Christ declared that he was sent to "preach good tidings to the poor" (Luke 4 : 18), and the first of his Beatitudes is "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6 : 20). **And decide with equity for the meek of the earth.** It is the *meek* poor that are to get justice in Christ's kingdom, not the *proud* poor, the angry poor, the revengeful and overbearing poor; and the poor can be all this as well as the rich. "Blessed are the meek" — the poor meek and the rich meek alike — "for they shall inherit the earth." **And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth.** The Messiah's words of stern judgment and just condemnation will fall on the earth, when he comes, like a scourge, a terrible rod. "Think not," said Christ (Matt. 10 : 34) "That I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." One of the first tasks of a missionary is to picture God's righteous anger against sin, and thus try to arouse the consciences of his hearers. **And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.** "The word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4 : 12). "The sayings of Christ pierce the conscience and penetrate the soul as no other words that ever came from a human mouth. In the last day words from his mouth will consign to everlasting life or everlasting destruction." — *Rawlinson.*

5. **And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist.** Righteousness shall surround the Messiah like a girdle, entering into his every action as a girdle does, holding garments out of the way and bracing the muscles. It is a fine piece of symbolism. **And faithfulness the girdle of his loins.** Thus the Psalmist declared that "Jehovah is righteous in all his ways" (Ps. 145 : 17); and thus Paul bade the Ephesian Christians to "stand, having girded your loins with truth" (Eph. 6 : 14). This faithfulness every missionary has realized, and *his* loins also have been girded with it for all his heavy tasks.

6. And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

III. **THE EXTENT AND DURATION OF THE KINGDOM**, Isa. 9 : 7; 11 : 6–10; Ps. 2 : 1–12. Not only does Isaiah picture marvellously the Ruler of the Kingdom and the Nature of the Kingdom, but he also portrays its vast extent and its limitless endurance. "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end," says Isaiah (9 : 7). It is to be established, "from henceforth even for ever." And it is to have back of it "the zeal of Jehovah of hosts" — a zealous God with all the powers and principalities of heaven. The continuance of the passage we have begun to study illustrates this further.

Isa. 11 : 6. **And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb.** There are to be wolves, in the Messiah's kingdom; but their characters are to change, their fierceness will be gone, they will be as gentle as lambs, so that they will live happily with them. **And the leopard shall lie down with the kid.** The reference is partly to the literal animals, for in the ideal world even the strife of animal with animal is to be abolished; partly the reference is to the struggle of man with the wild beasts and other wild natural forces, which will come to an end; and partly the prophet refers to savage men in their relations with civilized men; human savagery is to go the way of the savagery of the beasts. **And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together.** Lions are found in Palestine, as are wolves, leopards, and bears; these are the only ferocious beasts of the country. A fatling is an animal fattened for food. **And a little child shall lead them.** He would lead the calf and the fatling without fear, anyway; but then he shall lead even the lion, which will be as tame as the others. "The Christian world presents every Christmas a striking fulfilment of this prophetic utterance of the ancient Jewish seer. The Festival of the Little Child is celebrated in every country on the globe, and in every important group of islands in the sea. The host which follows the Little Child to Bethlehem to-day is numbered by the hundreds of millions, is gathered out of lands and seas, and embraces subjects of every king and queen, and of every emperor and empress, and citizens of every republic in the world. No race, or people, or tongue, scarce any tribe, but is represented in this host." — *Rev. Randolph H. McKim, D.D.* "The leadership of the little child, which is to be the millennial condition, may represent for us the dominion of those primary and fundamental impulses, those simplest principles and powers of life, to which men are often so unwilling to submit, but in submission to which all the best life comes, in submission to which alone the complete life of man can ever come. They are such primary emotions as the love of family, the love of country, the love of fellow-man, the love of God. Like a child, a great simple principle always impresses us as being just fresh from God, and as having yet but imperfectly put on our human flesh. It has a child's weakness and a child's strength." — *Phillips Brooks.* "Heaven lies about us in our infancy. The child promptly and simply acknowledges God, sets him openly on the throne over every act for every man to see. Let us go to God simply, freely, spontaneously, lovingly, as the bird goes to the nest, as the child goes

"A Little Child Shall Lead Them."

7. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

9. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.

---

to the mother." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.* "This reverence of youth as the new element, the progressive and advancing element, of the world is, I believe, peculiar to Christianity, and even in some measure to the Christianity of the present day. In that great Roman Empire into which our Lord was born the father had power over his grown-up son, power even of life and death, and even among the Jewish race from which he sprang the son was at his father's commandment in only a lesser degree. The authority of the man over the woman, and of the old man over the young, was carried to a frightful and debasing pitch even in those dark Middle Ages which some, who would be very sorry to have lived in them, still call the 'ages of faith.' And even those of us who can look back forty or fifty years must have heard of, if they cannot remember, a time when a son, even though he were himself the father of a family, did not venture to sit down in his father's presence until he was bid. It is only of late years that 'the rights of children' have been recognized. It may be doubted whether the right of the young to think their own thoughts is fully recognized even yet; whether even in this we hope and expect that God will reveal himself in new and larger forms to them, and cause a light to break forth upon them from his Holy Word which was denied to us. And yet only as they see more, and see more clearly, can the world grow in wisdom; only as they receive a finer and simpler inspiration from above can we hope that the world will grow better." — *Samuel Cox, D.D.*

7. **And the cow and the bear shall feed.** The bear in ancient Palestine did not confine itself to vegetable food, but also ate flesh. This sentence may mean that they shall *both graze*, or that they shall feed *alike*. The three lines of the verse thus far have essentially the same thought: the natures of wild beasts and tame beasts approximate, so that they can live together, sleep together, eat together. **Their young ones shall lie down together.** The animals will grow up together in one happy family. **And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.** Implying, with the change of food, the loss of the savage nature that brought him the flesh of his victims.

8. **And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp.** Some poisonous serpent is meant, but the scholars do not identify the species. This is an amazing proof of the universal peace, that a little child, too young to defend itself, can safely play on the hole of a deadly snake. **And the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.** Another deadly serpent is here meant, but it is not known what kind. Professor Day says (in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*) that "it is impossible to identify satisfactorily a single species" of the serpents mentioned in the Bible.

9. **They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.** "They" probably does not mean the wild beasts just mentioned, but rather men. "My holy mountain" may be Mt. Zion, the temple hill in Jerusalem; or it may be, as some scholars regard it, the hilly region of central Palestine. **For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.** Not the mere knowledge that Jehovah exists is meant; that is not to "know God." Knowing God implies knowing his nature, his laws, his will, and so knowing as to love them and him. It means the knowledge of the heart and of the life as well as of the head. The water covers the bed of the sea with entire thoroughness, entering every cave and each hidden corner, and running up into every bay and inlet. Thus inclusive and pervasive shall be the flow of redeeming knowledge as the missionaries bring all the earth under the loving sway of Jesus Christ.

John Wesley, in his eloquent sermon on this text, insists that Isaiah's prophecy will not be fulfilled except as we Christians conform to the spirit of Christ. When we thus commend the gospel, we may expect first our neighbors and finally the distant heathen to accept it. Wesley thus spoke: "The grand stumbling block being thus happily removed out of the way, namely, the lives of the Christians, the Mohammedans will look upon them with other eyes, and begin to give attention to their words. From them the leaven will soon spread to those who, till then, had

10. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.

Ps. 2 : 8. Ask of me, and I will give *thee* the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

---

no fear of God before their eyes. Observing 'the Christian dogs,' as they used to term them, to have changed their nature, to be sober, temperate, just, benevolent, and that in spite of all provocations to the contrary, from admiring their lives they will surely be led to consider and embrace their doctrine. And then the grand stumbling block being removed from the heathen nations also, the same Spirit will be poured out upon even those that remain in the uttermost parts of the sea. The poor American savage will no more ask, 'What are the Christians better than us?' when they see their steady practice of universal temperance, and of justice, mercy and truth. The Malabarian heathen will have no more room to say, 'Christian man take my wife; Christian man much drunk; Christian man kill man! *Devil — Christian!* Me no Christian.' Rather, seeing how far the Christians exceed their own countrymen in whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, they will adopt a very different language, and say, *Angel — Christian!*"

10. **And it shall come to pass in that day.** The day of Messiah's appearing. **That the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples.** "The root of Jesse" is the Messiah, the Branch from the roots described in verse 1. The ensign is the rallying-point of an army; so the peoples of all the world will rally around Jesus Christ. **Unto him shall the nations seek.** "Seek" means "resort, a word especially used of resorting for prayer (Isa. 55 : 6) or of consulting oracles (Isa. 8 : 19; 19 : 3)." — *Dummelow.* The time has already come when great multitudes in many heathen lands are looking eagerly toward the Redeemer, and pressing for admission into his church. **And his resting-place shall be glorious.** "The seat of his dominion is also the seat of his repose. The beneficent activity just described is wielded from a calm, central palace, and does not break the King's tranquillity. That is a paradox, except to those who know that Jesus Christ, sitting in undisturbed rest at the right hand of God, thence works with and for his servants. His repose is full of active energy; his active energy is full of repose, and that place of calm abode is 'glorious,' or, more emphatically and literally, 'glory.' He shall dwell in the blaze of the uncreated glory of God, — a prediction which is only fulfilled in its true meaning by Christ's ascension and session at the right hand of God, in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and into which he has borne that lowly manhood which he drew from the cut-down stem of Jesse." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

PSALM 2 is called by Spurgeon the Psalm of Messiah the Prince. It is one of the "Psalms of the Passion," and also one of the six Royal Psalms, the others being Psalms 20, 21, 45, 72, and 110. Delitzsch sums it up as being the psalm of "the Kingdom of God and of his Christ, to which everything must bow."

The psalm pictures the folly of the nations of the world in their vain opposition to Jehovah, and his Christ. They rage against the Almighty! He sits on his blazing throne and laughs at their petty boasting! This has been the tragedy and the comedy of the ages.

The heart of the psalm is in verse eight. Jehovah is talking with his Son, the Messiah, whom he will send to earth to receive the kingdom. He says:

Ps. 2 : 8. **Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance.** Christ did ask for all nations, and taught his disciples to offer the same great petition: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." They are rightfully God's, for he created them. They are rightfully Christ's, for he inherited them. Missions has for its gracious aim the winning of Christ's inheritance, in obedience to him and for the love of him. **And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.** There is nothing restricted in the aim and purpose of missions. Its watchwords are all in the superlative — uttermost, farthest, completest, fullest. This is a brood conception to come from a race such as the Hebrew, so often regarded as narrow-minded. But that is only one of the common misapprehensions of the Old Testament and the Jews.

The psalm closes with an exhortation of wisdom and prudence: Do not wait till it is too late, till the Son's wrath flames forth, till his punishments dash men in pieces

like a potter's vessel. Serve God now ! Accept Christ now ! Enter now into the blessing which Christ has ready and waiting ! This is the appeal of Christian missions : " To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

*The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.*

THE ENTIRE BIBLE A MISSIONARY BOOK. " The first condition of rightly using the Bible for missionary purposes is to put the New Testament in its right place at the front, and not to weaken its effect by improperly mixing it with the Old. When that is done it stands out as an essentially and absolutely missionary book ; it is from first to last the announcement of a truth which from the nature of the case must be announced to the world ; it is the record of missionaries, the sole object of which is to engage all who hear to become missionaries themselves. To weaken its missionary meaning is to neutralize its whole work ; and to ignore its missionary command is to reduce the whole book to an absurdity.

" It is not that here and there are missionary texts, injunctions, or suggestions, and that a careful student might painfully extract from certain proof-texts a defence of missionary effort ; but it is that the whole book is a clear, ringing, and everlasting missionary injunction. The angel flies abroad through the heavens having the everlasting gospel to preach ; it is expressly directed to every human soul, and on every human soul that hears it is laid the obligation of passing it on to the rest.

" How readers of the New Testament can ever have read it without realizing this, its essential characteristic, is a wonder that belongs to the mystery of iniquity. It is as if the dark spirit that would keep the world in darkness, unable to blot out the everlasting gospel, had succeeded in casting a veil over the eyes that read it, or had hidden it away in the mass of religious usage, tradition, and literature, until its distinctive character was obscured. Bring the New Testament out, pull down the musty buildings which are built around it, like the houses which once obscured Antwerp Cathedral, then let the winds of criticism blow around it and through it as they will : you can never prevent it from being God's great missionary message to the world, or from claiming that those who bear it should go out as his messengers, their lips touched with a coal from his altar.

" But when the New Testament is placed in the forefront, we are able to strike back into the older literature with very rich results. Not only do we there find the roots of the missionary religion, but at every point of every fiber we discover prognostications of the coming truth. The Law indicates its intention by the fact that Moses foretold a Prophet like unto himself, to whom the hopes of the people were always to be directed ; the history indicated its goal from its starting-point, for the father of the race was assured that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed ; the Prophets, apparently absorbed in the instruction and chastisement of Israel, were irresistibly anticipating a spiritual Israel as wide as the world ; and the poets after their kind dived into the depths of the soul and dipped into the future, with the result that all men and all times were brought under their view.

" And when we take the Christian gospel with its world-wide scope as the key to unlock the treasures of the Old Testament, we find that everywhere, under the thin veils of time and circumstance, the truths which justify the missionary impulse were present. It is the strange characteristic of the Bible that a unity pervades it which makes its several parts interpret one another, and displays the same truths with more or less completeness under differing forms. Thus, when we have learned to trace the lines of historical and spiritual development through the whole, arranging the parts chronologically, in order to illustrate it we can take up the Bible where we will, and read on every page from Genesis to Revelation the missionary purpose." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D. D., in "The Bible a Missionary Book."*

## LESSON XIII. — December 30.

## REVIEW: THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** — *They shall utter the memory of thy great goodness, And shall sing of thy righteousness.* — Ps. 145 : 7.

**Devotional Reading:** Titus 2 : 11–14.
**Primary Topic:** FAVORITE MISSIONARY STORIES.
**Memory Verse:** Every day will I bless thee;
And I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Ps. 145 : 2.

**Junior Topic:** WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT MISSIONS.
**Memory Verse:** John 3 : 16.
**Intermediate and Senior Topic:** WHAT IS MY MISSIONARY DUTY?
**Topic for Young People and Adults:** THE PRESENT MISSIONARY OUTLOOK.

As usual, a number of plans for review are given, so that the teacher may select whichever is best adapted to the age and advancement of his pupils. The plans may be modified as thought best, and two or more plans may be combined.

## I. LIVING PICTURES.

Taking the beautiful series of Lesson Pictures published by the W. A. Wilde Company of Boston, the teacher may use them for a review in the Primary Class by grouping as many of the children as is necessary in order to represent each one of the pictures. The children not in the group will guess what scene of the quarter's lessons is represented. Then the picture will be shown, and the teacher will designate one of the group to tell about the event. Thus you will proceed with all the pictures.

## II. A DENOMINATIONAL REVIEW.

The older classes will find it very profitable to use this review lesson for strengthening the grasp of denominational missions upon the minds of their members. To that end divide the lessons among the members of the class, and ask each to bring to the recitation as many illustrations of that lesson as he can find, taking them all from the stories of the missionary work of his own denomination, as reported in books and in the missionary periodicals, pamphlets, and reports of the denominational missionary boards. If he can find nothing illustrating the special lesson assigned him, let him bring in what he can that illustrates, from the denominational work, the general theme of the quarter.

## III. A MISSION-BOARD REVIEW.

A stirring conclusion for this quarter's lessons may be made by forming the class into a mission board, the teacher as the president of the board, one of the pupils as foreign secretary, another as home secretary, another as treasurer. Each will have some letter to read from some one of the denominational mission fields, home or foreign. These "letters" will be taken from the denominational missionary magazines, and may be actual letters or interesting extracts from articles. After each has been read the teacher will lead the class to discuss it, ask what can be done about it, and bring in portions of the quarter's lessons that apply to it.

## IV. A SIXTY-SIX REVIEW.

Divide the sixty-six books of the Bible among the members of your class, assigning to each a long book or two and some shorter books, and also dividing fairly the more difficult books. Each pupil is to glance over the books assigned him and discover their missionary teachings, or at least find in each some missionary verse. The recitation will include, of course, the books which our quarter's lessons have touched upon, and will bring out the pervasiveness of the missionary motive in the Bible.

## V. A MISSIONARY-TEST REVIEW.

Tell your class to go over the lessons of the quarter at home so thoroughly as to be prepared for a written examination upon them. All the questions will have to do with missions, and will seek to bring out the central thought of each lesson. You will write the questions on long strips of paper and place them before the class one at a time, fastening each strip over the preceding one, and dividing the time fairly among the questions. Grade the papers and return them at the next session of the class. The following questions, one from each lesson, will serve as samples, or you may use them as they stand :

1. What were the missionary characteristics of Abraham ?
2. What was God's missionary purpose for Israel ?
3. What in Israel's geographical situation made it easy for it to be a missionary nation ?
4. What was the missionary teaching of Jonah ?

5. (also on lesson 4). What is a missionary teaching of Isaiah ?
6. Quote a missionary verse of some Psalm.
7. Name some particulars in which Christ was the ideal missionary
8. Why should every Christian be a missionary ?
9. Whence came the missionary power of the early church ?
10. Describe the gradual outreach of the early church.
11. Why must Christian missions cover the earth ?
12. What will Christ's universal reign do for mankind ?

## VI. A MISSIONARY-PROBLEMS REVIEW.

Older classes, considering our quarter's lessons in their present-day aspect, will enjoy a series of discussions of the problems of modern missions as suggested by the various lessons we have studied. Each may be assigned to a different member of the class, who will lead the class in the discussion of that particular subject. The following list may prove helpful.

*Lesson I.* Present-day idolatry : how wage war against it ?
*Lesson II.* How make ours a missionary nation ?
*Lesson III.* Missionary resources of our country : how use them to the full ?
*Lesson IV.* How develop the prophetic missionary spirit among modern Christians ?
*Lesson V.* Forms of intemperance that oppose the missionary spirit : how combat them ?
*Lesson VI.* How develop the joyous aspect of missions ?
*Lesson VII.* How make Christians more like their Master ?
*Lesson VIII.* How bring home to each Christian the call of the Great Commission ?
*Lesson IX.* How fill the church with the power of the Holy Spirit ?
*Lesson X.* Present-day hindrances to the spread of the gospel : how overcome them ?
*Lesson XI.* How Christ's church can win the entire world ; and how soon ?
*Lesson XII.* What must be changed in the world before Christ can reign over it ?

## VII. A MISSION-TEXTS REVIEW.

Ask the pupils, a week in advance, to go over the lessons carefully at home, and find in each at least one mission text which they will copy and bring to the class. They are not to use the golden texts unless these are chosen from the lesson passages, but are to search through the lesson passages themselves. In the class the teacher will take up the lessons one at a time, calling for the mission texts, and discussing them in their bearing on the lives of the pupils and the large work of the Christian church.

# INDEX.


| Subject | Page |
|---|---|
| Abraham, a Blessing to the Whole World | 290 |
| Abraham, the Hero of Faith | 98 |
| Abraham offers up Isaac | 105 |
| Abraham's bosom | 37 |
| Abraham's rescue of Lot | 104 |
| Abraham's training | 292 |
| Abraham's wise choice | 103 |
| Abraham tested | 295 |
| Accession Psalm | 320 |
| Action and knowledge (illus.) | 43 |
| Acts, characteristics of the book | 276 |
| Advancement to high place (illus.) | 178 |
| Alabaster cruse | 241 |
| "Alaxamenos worships his god" (illus.) | 87 |
| Alcohol and the ruin it works | 317 |
| Ananias and Sapphira | 252 |
| Anathoth, home of Jeremiah | 162 |
| "And if our faith had given us nothing more" | 202 |
| Annunciation to Mary | 194 |
| Appearances of the risen Lord | 97 |
| Artaxerxes and Nehemiah | 169 |
| Asenath, wife of Joseph | 110 |
| Baal priests executed | 153 |
| Baptism required | 346 |
| Barnabas and Saul | 252 |
| Barnabas chooses Mark | 257 |
| Barnabas chooses Peter | 256 |
| Barnabas in Jerusalem | 256 |
| Barnabas the Great-Hearted | 250 |
| Barnabas the missionary | 255 |
| Basil's ingratitude (illus.) | 45 |
| Beggars in the East | 26 |
| Bethany | 236 |
| "Be yours such thought as Joseph felt" | 112 |
| Bible a missionary book | 371 |
| "Bless'd inhabitants of Zion" | 301 |
| Blessing the bread | 96 |
| Blind man at Jericho | 53 |
| "Blow, blow, thou winter wind" | 45 |
| Boaz the generous | 129 |
| Boston and his daughter (illus.) | 234 |
| Brainerd and the Psalms | 327 |
| Burning bush | 118 |
| Business and Christianity | 59 |
| Business man and clerk (illus.) | 342 |
| "But only Luke is with him now" | 279 |
| "But still a firm and faithful trust" | 155 |
| Cæsarea Philippi | 206 |
| Calvary and probable sites | 82 |
| Canaan a goodly land | 307 |
| Cana miracle | 200 |
| Candidates — origin of word (illus.) | 137 |
| Carey and money-making (illus.) | 174 |
| Carey and the Psalms | 328 |
| Carmel struggle | 151 |
| Carob-tree beans | 30 |
| Cave of Machpelah | 106 |
| Chariot of fire | 154 |
| Cherith, Elijah's refuge | 150 |
| Chief butler and baker | 109 |
| Chief seats | 22 |
| Christ and crowds | 331 |
| Christians Called to be Missionaries | 337 |
| Christ's death and its meaning | 87 |
| Christ's education | 196 |
| Christ's first visit to Jerusalem | 197 |
| Christ's gospel | 333 |
| Christ's mission | 332 |
| Christ's testimony to John the Baptist | 192 |
| Church organization | 244 |
| Cleopas | 93 |
| Coal from the altar | 158 |
| Coat of many colors | 108 |
| Coins and their destinies (illus.) | 69 |
| Community of goods | 251 |
| Cornelius the centurion | 212 |
| Covenant of God with Abraham | 104 |
| Cupbearers | 169 |
| Cyprus, home of Barnabas | 251 |
| David promotes religion | 146 |
| David's legacy to the world | 147 |
| David, the Poet-King | 139 |
| Deacons, their origin | 244 |
| Defeat transformed into victory | 272 |
| Demas | 279 |
| Demon-possession | 229, 230 |
| Denarius | 69 |
| "Did we dare in our agony of prayer" | 345 |
| Dives | 36 |
| Domes of St. Peter's (illus.) | 126 |
| "Don't write there" (illus.) | 38 |
| Doubts of John the Baptist | 190 |
| Driven from Jerusalem | 350 |
| Duff and the Psalms | 328 |
| Duke and his diamonds (illus.) | 63 |
| Durham, and the supremacy of religion (illus.) | 314 |
| Eagles' wings | 300 |
| Eben-ezer stone | 135 |
| Education of Moses | 117 |
| Elijah, the Brave Reformer | 148 |
| Eli's evil sons | 133 |
| Esdraelon, its great battles | 310 |
| Esther, the Patriot Queen | 176 |
| Eternal life | 336 |
| Eunice | 281 |
| Euphrates | 306 |
| Europe reached by the gospel | 358 |
| Evangelism: what it is | 338 |
| Every Christian an evangelist (illus.) | 340 |
| Examples of faithfulness and unfaithfulness | 66 |
| Excuses for not helping men (illus.) | 339 |
| Exodus from Egypt | 120 |
| Faithfulness and Michelangelo (illus.) | 63 |
| Faith of Abraham | 103 |
| Farewell addresses of Moses | 124 |
| Fasting | 51, 180 |
| Fire a symbol of the Deity | 344 |
| Fishers of men | 205 |
| Flight into Egypt | 196 |
| Food conservation in Egypt | 111 |
| Forgiveness and fidelity | 41 |
| "From the brightness of the glory" | 340 |
| Gamaliel, Paul's teacher | 259 |
| Gardiner and the Psalms | 328 |
| Gates of Hades | 207 |
| George the Third's condescension (illus.) | 15 |
| Gethsemane, The garden of | 75 |
| Girdle as a symbol | 367 |
| Giving is a privilege (illus.) | 72 |
| Giving of the Law on Sinai | 123 |
| Golden calf | 123 |
| Goliath defeated | 143 |
| Gospel by Matthew | 226 |
| Gospel: its meaning | 330 |
| Grace of Gratitude, The | 40 |
| Gratitude and service | 231 |
| Great Commission | 338 |
| Great supper, Parable of | 22 |
| Hades, the unseen world | 37 |
| Hallelujah Christian (illus.) | 44 |
| Haman's plot | 179 |
| Hannah's prayers | 132 |
| Hannah's thanksgiving psalm | 133 |
| Hannington and the Psalms | 328 |
| Haran | 100 |
| Hardest mission fields sought (illus.) | 350 |
| Harvest customs | 129 |
| Hazlitt and Coleridge | 97 |
| Heathen gods pass away | 303 |
| "He heeded not reviling tones" | 248 |
| "Here standeth Luke, physician once and still" | 279 |
| Heretic in the trunk (illus.) | 33 |
| Herod and Christ | 81 |
| Herodias and Salome | 192 |
| Hinduism and its failures | 303 |
| Hittites | 306 |

| Subject | Page |
|---|---|
| Holy Spirit possession | 341 |
| Holy Spirit: receiving him | 345 |
| Hospitality accepted by Paul | 360 |
| Hospitality in the New Testament | 278 |
| Humility and service | 24 |
| Hyksos kings in Egypt | 116 |
| "I know not what awaits me" | 360 |
| "I meant to go back" | 44 |
| Importunate widow, Parable of the | 48 |
| "Impossibilities" accomplished (illus.) | 341 |
| India: missionary results there | 340 |
| Inscription on the cross | 84 |
| Intercessory prayer (illus.) | 181 |
| Isaac born | 105 |
| Isaiah's call to service | 156 |
| Isaiah's inspired writings | 160 |
| Isaiah's missionary message | 311 |
| Isaiah the statesman | 159 |
| Isaiah, the Statesman-Prophet | 155 |
| Israel, a Missionary Nation | 298 |
| Israel central among the nations | 310 |
| Israel in the Midst of the Nations | 304 |
| James the first martyr | 356 |
| Jeremiah's call | 162 |
| Jeremiah's preaching | 163 |
| Jeremiah's writings | 163 |
| Jeremiah, the Prophet of Courage | 161 |
| Jesse, the father of David | 141 |
| Jesus and Zacchæus | 53 |
| Jesus Crucified | 80 |
| Jesus Healing on the Sabbath | 13 |
| Jesus in Gethsemane | 73 |
| Jesus in our homes | 56 |
| Jesus Teaching Humility | 21 |
| Jesus Teaching in the Temple | 66 |
| John at the Cross | 217 |
| John at the Last Supper | 217 |
| John Mark | 266 |
| John's call to discipleship | 215 |
| John's farewell | 219 |
| John's old age | 220 |
| John's writings | 221 |
| John the Apostle | 214 |
| John the Baptist | 185 |
| Jonadab, ancestor of Rechabites | 165 |
| Jonah's missionary message | 312 |
| Joseph (Barnabas) | 251 |
| Joseph's forgiveness | 112 |
| Joseph the Preserver of His People | 107 |
| Judas and the ointment | 241 |
| Land of Goshen | 114 |
| Lazarus | 36 |
| Lazarus raised from death | 240 |
| Lebanon | 305 |
| Leprosy and sin (illus.) | 42, 76 |
| Levi | 224 |
| Libertines, Synagogue of | 245 |
| Lincoln's temperance principles | 322 |
| Livingstone and the Psalms | 328 |
| Lois | 281 |
| "Lord Christ, if thou art with us" | 97 |
| "Lord, make us truly wise" | 38 |
| Lost sheep and coin | 28 |
| Luke's fidelity | 279 |
| Luke's Gospel | 275 |
| Luke's probable history | 274 |
| Luke, the Beloved Physician | 273 |
| Luke the Physician | 278 |
| Luther and the soldier (illus.) | 63 |
| Lystra | 283 |
| Machærus, prison of John the Baptist | 190 |
| Madagascar martyrs (illus.) | 361 |
| Magdala | 229 |
| "Magdalena, past is wailing" | 235 |
| Magnificat, The | 195 |
| Man from Macedonia | 358 |
| Mark as a missionary | 269 |
| Mark makes good | 271 |
| Mark's failure in Perga | 269 |
| Mark's gospel | 271 |
| Martha and Mary | 235 |
| Martyn and the Psalms | 328 |
| Mary at the cross | 201 |
| Mary Magdalene | 228 |
| Mary Magdalene and Jesus | 92 |
| Mary Magdalene at the tomb | 232 |
| Mary, the Mother of Jesus | 193 |
| Mary, the Mother of Mark | 267 |
| Matthew's call | 224 |
| Matthew's great feast | 225 |
| Matthew's life and death | 226 |
| Matthew the Publican | 222 |
| Micah's missionary message | 314 |
| Ministry as a life work, The | 287 |
| Miracles of healing | 331 |
| Missionary faith tested | 297 |
| Missionary meaning of the Psalms | 327 |
| Missionary motive | 316 |
| Missionary results (illus.) | 342 |
| Mission of Israel | 303 |
| Missions an adventure of faith | 294 |
| Mizpah miracle | 134 |
| Mohammedanism and its failures | 302 |
| Mohammedans shaming drinkers (illus.) | 320 |
| Money-changers in the temple | 66 |
| Money, Use of | 40 |
| Moody on evangelistic results (illus.) | 57 |
| Mordecai's independence | 178 |
| Moses: Liberator and Lawgiver | 115 |
| Mountains and great souls (illus.) | 77 |
| Mount of Transfiguration | 208 |
| Mount Sinai (Horeb) | 299 |
| Naboth tragedy | 154 |
| Naomi in Bethlehem | 128 |
| Napoleon and Wellington (illus.) | 55 |
| Nazirites | 187 |
| Nehemiahs needed to-day | 176 |
| Nehemiah's reforms | 175 |
| Nehemiah, the Bold Builder | 168 |
| Next of kin | 130 |
| Nineveh and Jonah | 313, 314 |
| "Not for you the life of sloth" | 165 |
| Ointment of spikenard | 241 |
| "One little hour of watching with the Master" | 65 |
| Orpah goes back | 126 |
| Our Lord Jesus a Missionary | 328 |
| Out of the frame (illus.) | 348 |
| Paints, The box of (illus.) | 53 |
| Palestine's flora | 308 |
| Palestine's geographical position | 293 |
| Palestine's influence | 308 |
| Palestine's mineral resources | 308 |
| Palestine's physical features | 308 |
| Palestine's symbols on coins | 68 |
| Parable of the Pounds | 60 |
| Passover instituted | 120 |
| Patience taught by Christ | 72 |
| Patriotic lessons from Esther | 183 |
| Paul converted | 260 |
| Paul in prison | 262 |
| Paul's friends | 263 |
| Paul's personal character | 263 |
| Paul's writings | 264 |
| Paul the Apostle | 257 |
| Paul the church organizer | 264 |
| Paul the pioneer missionary | 261 |
| Paul the traveler | 264 |
| Paul the theologian | 264 |
| Pause of a stream (illus.) | 78 |
| Pentecost | 344 |
| Pentecosts on the mission fields (illus.) | 347 |
| Peter and Paul | 213 |
| Peter's denial of Christ | 209 |
| Peter's great confession | 206 |
| Peter's sword | 79, 209 |
| Peter the apostle | 211 |
| Pharisee and publican, Parable of the | 50 |

| Subject | Page |
|---|---|
| Philip and the Ethiopian | 354 |
| Philippi | 277 |
| Physical harm wrought by alcohol | 318 |
| Pictures on garments | 36 |
| Pilate and Christ | 81 |
| Pisgah vision | 124 |
| Plagues of Egypt | 119 |
| Pounds and their use | 61 |
| Prayer better than sleep (illus.) | 53 |
| Prayer of Nehemiah | 169 |
| Pride in social intercourse (illus.) | 24 |
| Prodigal Son, The | 27 |
| Prohibition effects | 322 |
| Prohibition's economic gains | 322 |
| Pruning-hooks | 307 |
| Psalm of God's goodness | 326 |
| Psalm of God's guidance | 324 |
| Psalm of God's power | 324 |
| Psalms of David | 146 |
| Publicans and their work | 223 |
| Punishment of unfaithfulness | 65 |
| Purim, Feast of | 179, 182 |
| Quicksilver contacts (illus.) | 70 |
| Rabbis' titles | 50 |
| Ravens feed Elijah | 149 |
| Readiness for God's work | 158 |
| Rechabites and Jeremiah | 164 |
| Reformers may learn from Elijah | 155 |
| Remorse of Charles the Ninth (illus.) | 77 |
| Rephidim | 299 |
| Resurrection proofs | 98 |
| Review: Great Men and Women of the Old Testament | 183 |
| Review: Great Men and Women of the New Testament | 287 |
| Review: Jesus the World's Saviour | 87 |
| Review: The World for Christ | 371 |
| Riches of Christ | 362 |
| Rich Man and Lazarus, The | 34 |
| Rings and their significance | 32 |
| "Rise, crowned with light" | 303 |
| Rockefeller on Frederick T. Gates (illus.) | 40 |
| Rome reached by the gospel | 361 |
| "Rough old fisherman, brotherly dear" | 213 |
| Ruins of Jerusalem | 170 |
| Ruler of the synagogue | 17 |
| Ruskin on Matthew | 225 |
| Ruth's glorious posterity | 131 |
| Ruth, the Faithful Daughter | 135 |
| Sabbath fruit-bearing | 15 |
| Sabbath-keeping and Nehemiah | 176 |
| Sabbath labor (illus.) | 19, 20 |
| Sabbath restorations | 16 |
| Sabbath warnings | 14 |
| Sacrificial service | 26 |
| Salome, mother of John | 215 |
| Salvation offered by Christ | 335 |
| Samaria receives the gospel | 352 |
| Samuel: Judge and Prophet | 131 |
| Samuel reviews his life | 135 |
| Samuel's ephod | 134 |
| Samuel's work and spirit | 139 |
| Sanballat and Nehemiah | 171 |
| Sanhedrin tries Stephen | 246 |
| Sarah | 291 |
| Saul and David | 144 |
| Second coming of Christ | 46 |
| Second Isaiah | 160 |
| Seeking love of God, The | 29 |
| Selah, its meaning | 324 |
| Sennacherib's attack | 159 |
| Seraphim | 157 |
| Serpents in Palestine | 319 |
| Service and work | 239 |
| "Seven times the letter that denotes the inward stain" | 231 |
| Seven Words from the Cross | 85, 86 |
| Simon becomes Peter | 205 |
| Simon Peter | 203 |
| Simon the leper | 241 |
| Simon the sorcerer | 212 |
| Simon the sorcerer's mistake | 353 |
| Sin and its record (illus.) | 51 |
| Sin as a handle (illus.) | 58 |
| Singing for Christ (illus.) | 243 |
| Sin of David | 146 |
| Sitting at the feet of teachers | 237 |
| Sodom destroyed | 104 |
| "So Matthew left his golden gains" | 225 |
| Some Missionary Teachings of the Prophets | 310 |
| Some Missionary Teachings of the Psalms | 323 |
| Sorrowful Way | 82 |
| Soup-tureen in bed (illus.) | 239 |
| Spirit of Prayer, The | 47 |
| Spread of the gospel | 361 |
| Stephen's spirit in the modern church | 249 |
| Stephen the Martyr | 243 |
| Stoning outside the city | 248 |
| Straightened by Christ (illus.) | 16 |
| "Sundays the pillars are" | 20 |
| Swine in the East | 30 |
| Sycomore tree | 55 |
| Synagogue speakers | 330 |
| Talmud Sabbath rules | 17 |
| Tarsus, the home of Paul | 259 |
| Temperance | 165, 317 |
| Terah | 291 |
| The Outreach of the Early Church | 349 |
| "The pent life rushes swift along" | 16 |
| The Power of the Early Church | 343 |
| "The world was void" | 312 |
| "Thou art rich, thou art kind, thou art free" | 297 |
| "Thou who hast power to look" | 78 |
| Timothy, a Good Minister of Christ Jesus | 279 |
| Timothy, Epistles to | 286 |
| Timothy's career | 284 |
| Timothy's training | 281 |
| Tishbe the home of Elijah | 149 |
| Tithes | 51 |
| Titles of Kings (illus.) | 366 |
| Tolstoi and the beggar (illus.) | 36 |
| Tongues | 345 |
| Tribute to Cæsar | 69 |
| Trinity: the doctrine | 340 |
| Unforgiveness in death (illus.) | 112 |
| Universal Reign of Christ, The | 364 |
| Unjust steward, Parable of the | 35 |
| Vashti's brave stand | 178 |
| Virgil's Eclogues (illus.) | 31 |
| Vulture and wounded soldier (illus.) | 31 |
| Walk to Emmaus, The | 90 |
| Wesley on missionary progress | 369 |
| "When in darkness and clouds" | 233 |
| "Whereto shall we liken this Blessed Mary Virgin" | 194 |
| Widow's mite | 71 |
| Wild animals in Palestine | 368 |
| Wilderness life of the Baptist | 187 |
| Wilderness training of Moses | 118 |
| "Wilt thou full health attain" | 43 |
| Wind a symbol of God's presence | 344 |
| Winning souls (illus.) | 59 |
| Wise Men, The | 195 |
| Witnessing nation, A | 301 |
| Witness of John the Baptist | 190 |
| Women ministering to Jesus | 334 |
| World welfare and our relation to it | 295 |
| World-Wide Prohibition | 317 |
| World-Wide Missions | 357 |
| Xerxes' palace | 181 |
| Youth and Christianity | 369 |
| Zacchæus | 54 |
| "Zacchæus struggled with the crowd" | 57 |
| Zacharias, father of John the Baptist | 187 |
| Zarephath and Elijah | 150 |
| Zephaniah's missionary message | 316 |
| Zinzendorf's notes to Christ (illus.) | 78 |

# Wilde's Bible Pictures

## *Sunday-School Teachers*

will find them the most complete set of Biblical Pictures published. They are instructive, helpful and almost indispensable to the Sunday-school teacher in obtaining the best results from his work, for Pictures which illustrate make lasting impressions.

*The Pictures are printed on heavy coated paper, 6 x 8 inches. Price, one and one-half cents each, postpaid. No orders for less than ten received.*

Total List of Bible Pictures Comprises Over 800 Subjects

*A Catalog will be sent if requested*

# Wilde's Bible Picture Set

Illustrating the International Improved Lessons for 1923

60 *Pictures in Portfolio*—90 *cents postpaid*

# Golden Texts

This popular little book contains the Sunday-school Lessons, Golden Texts, Bible Readings, Ten Commandments, Twenty-third Psalm, Beatitudes, Lord's Prayer, etc. Bound in a very handsome cover. *Price, 7 cents each;* $7.00 *per* 100 *copies. Postage, 3 cents a dozen additional.*

# Peloubet's Uniform Graded Lesson Quarterlies

THE editors and publisher of the *Peloubet Series of Quarterlies* have ever united in striving to make this series unexcelled.

The editors are preëminently fitted for their work, having each studied for over a quarter of a century preparing Quarterlies for Sunday Schools.

They have, during this long period, had every facility for fitting themselves in the best possible manner for this special service, and have become expert questioners, explainers and elucidators of the Word of God. The entire series is edited on a careful, systematic and graded plan, and commencing with the smallest child moves steadily forward up to the most studious adult, each Quarterly being closely adapted to suit the specific needs of its grade.

*We Also Publish a Series of*

## Teachers' Quarterlies

which contain helpful material for the teacher to use in preparing the lesson, and which have become very popular during the past years.

All that we ask is fair, unprejudiced examination of *Peloubet's Quarterlies;* and if they are not found to excel all similar Quarterlies in many essentials we shall not expect an order.

We have made these Quarterlies on honor for over forty-five years, and continue to put them before the religious world, feeling confident they will, as in years past, be appreciated by all discerning minds.

We shall be glad to send free samples and catalogue giving full details to all intending purchasers.

# List *of* Peloubet's Graded Quarterlies

**The Illustrated Senior Sunday-School Quarterly** Price, 10 cents a number; 40 cents a year

**The Intermediate Sunday-School Quarterly**
Price, 10 cents a number; 40 cents a year

**The Home Department Quarterly**
Price, 10 cents a number; 40 cents a year

**The Junior Sunday-School Quarterly**
Price, 8 cents a number; 32 cents a year

**The Teachers' Edition of the Illustrated Senior Sunday-School Quarterly**
Price, 15 cents a number; 60 cents a year

**The Teachers' Edition of the Intermediate Sunday-School Quarterly**
Price, 15 cents a number; 60 cents a year

**The Junior Teachers' Quarterly**
Price, 15 cents a number; 60 cents a year

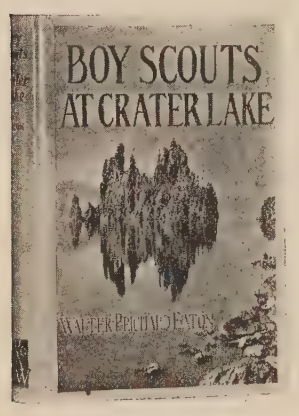
**Little Ones' Quarterly** Price, 4 cents a number; 16 cents a year

**Lesson Leaves (Senior Grade)**
A separate lesson leaf for every Sunday in the year.
Price, $1.00 per 100 per month; $12 per 100 per year

*Subscriptions for any of the Quarterlies in this series taken for three, six or nine months, at yearly rate*

**Order of Opening and Closing Service for the Sunday-School**
With Music, Responsive Readings, Apostles' Creed, Beatitudes, Ten Commandments, etc. Price, $1.00 per 100 copies

# New Books *for* Young People




## Boy Scouts at Crater Lake

**A Story of the High Cascades. By WALTER PRICHARD EATON.**

Mr. Eaton again gives to the Boy Scouts of this country a glimpse of another of our wonderful National Parks—Crater Lake Park. It is a fine boy's book. Full of illustrations from photographs taken by Fred H. Kiser, the noted Rocky Mountain photographer. 320 *pp.* *Cloth*, $1.75

## Becky

**A Story. By AMY E. BLANCHARD.**

Illustrated with colored jacket and cover. Every reader will find in Becky a strong, wholesome, natural girl and love her for what she truly is. A strong story of happy home life. 320 *pp.* *Cloth*, $1.75

## The Young Wireless Operator—with the Oyster Fleet

**How Alec Cunningham Won His Way to the Top in the Oyster Business. By LEWIS E. THEISS.**

Illustrated colored jacket and cover. To every boy this story will appeal, for it shows how a member of the Camp Brady Wireless Patrol used his knowledge of the radio when he started in to learn the oyster business. How many know how oysters are planted, fed, gathered and marketed? It is a wonderful industry in itself. 328 *pp.* *Cloth*, $1.75

## Camp-Fire Yarns

**Or Famous Stories Told Around the Camp-Fire. By FRANK H. CHELEY, editor of the "Father and Son Magazine."**

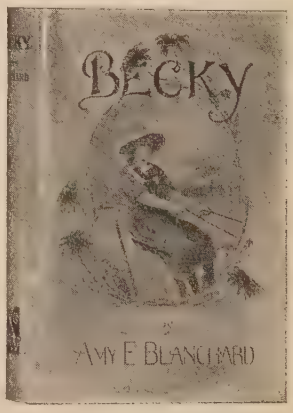
Illustrated with colored jacket and cover. No boy or man has ever forgotten those evenings he spent before the camp-fire. Mr. Cheley is an old camper and his stories as told before the camp-fires are the choicest selections which have ever been issued. Boys and their fathers, too, will revel in them. 264 *pp.* *Cloth*, $1.50

## Jacinth and Her Fairy Friends

**Beautifully Illustrated with Colored and Line Pictures by the Author, NELLIE M. PAIRPOINT.**

How fascinating spring is among the trees and in the woods! Flowers nestle among the old tree trunks and the birds twitter and the squirrels chatter as if a visitor had no right upon their domain. But Jacinth knew them all and they loved her, and even the little people concealed in the trunks of the trees came out at her call, or when she used her magic wand

128 *pp.* *Cloth*, $1.00



# Good Books *for* Boys *and* Girls

## Stories on Scouting and Out-of-Door Life

*By* W. P. EATON

The Boy Scouts of Berkshire
The Boy Scouts in the Dismal Swamp
The Boy Scouts in the White Mountains
Boy Scouts of the Wildcat Patrol
Peanut—Cub Reporter
Boy Scouts in Glacier Park
On the Edge of the Wilderness
A Girl Scout of Red Rose Troop By Amy E. Blanchard

*Price, $1.75 each, net*

## Stories of Camp Fire Life

*By* AMY E. BLANCHARD

The Campfire Girls of Brightwood
Fagots and Flames
In Camp with the Muskoday Campfire Girls
Lucky Penny of Thistle Troop
From Tenderfoot to Golden Eaglet

*Price, $1.75 each, net*

## Stories of Wireless Telegraphy

*By* LEWIS E. THEISS

The Wireless Patrol at Camp Brady
The Young Wireless Operator Afloat
The Secret Wireless
The Hidden Aerial
The Young Wireless Operator—as a Fire Patrol

*Price, $1.75 each, net*

## Stories of the American Navy

*By* Capt. E. L. BEACH

Ralph Osborn—Midshipman at Annapolis
Midshipman Ralph Osborn at Sea
Ensign Ralph Osborn
Lieutenant Ralph Osborn Aboard a Torpedo Boat Destroyer

*Price, $1.75 each, net*

***Complete Catalogue Sent upon Request***

# Books *for* Adults

## Sky-Line Camps

A Notebook of a Wanderer in our Northwestern Mountains. *By Walter Prichard Eaton.*

A gift book for every home. Have you ever appreciated the beauty and grandeur of our American Rockies? Tramp with Mr. Eaton over this wonderful country, every step of which he knows, and let him thrill you with its unsurpassed grandeur. Mr. Fred H. Kiser, the companion of the author over the trails and who is one of the foremost Rocky Mountain photographers, contributes added value to the book by his many and rare photographs. It is the gift book of the season.

268 *pp.* *Cloth, boxed*, $2.50

## Penguin Persons *and* Peppermints

A Volume of Essays. *By Walter Prichard Eaton*, author, critic and playwright.

Fascinating from beginning to end. The choice of subjects gives the author full sway to his wonderful powers of humor, description and serious thought. There are few authors who have greater ability than has Mr. Eaton in making his readers feel they are in intimate touch with the very purpose and thought of the writer. His writings and talks make great appeal through the human side, and as you tramp through the valley or stand looking over the precipice into the grandeur of the scenery beyond, you are by his side. This volume will cover every varying mood of the reader.

252 *pp.* *Cloth bound*, $1.50

# Sunday-School Workers' Library

*An Invaluable Assistant to Pastors, Superintendents and Teachers*

### By REV. A. F. SCHAUFFLER, D.D.

**Ways of Working.** Helpful Hints for Sunday-school Officials and Teachers.

**The Teacher, the Child, and the Book.** Practical Suggestions and Methods for Sunday-school Workers.

**Sparks from the Superintendent's Anvil.** A Practical Helper for Every Sunday-school Worker.

*Price, $1.50 each postpaid*

### By AMOS R. WELLS

**Sunday-school Problems.** A Book of Practical Plans for Sunday-school Teachers and Officers.

**Sunday-school Essentials.** What Every Sunday-school Teacher and Superintendent needs the most in order to win success. *Price, $1.50 each postpaid*

### By MRS. M. G. KENNEDY

**Our Boys and Girls.** How to Interest and Instruct Them in Bible Study. 128 pp. Cloth. Price, $1.25 postpaid.

It is the summing up of the life work of this wonderful Bible teacher of little folks.

### By HENRY TURNER BAILEY

**The Blackboard in the Sunday-school.**

*Price, $1.00 postpaid*

This book is replete with hints and suggestions to amateurs on the principles of drawing.

### By FLORENCE H. DARNELL

**The Blackboard Class for Primary Sunday-school Teachers.**

*Price, 50 cents postpaid*

The author of this little book has hit the happy medium between practice and theory, giving just enough of both to enable one to draw freely and effectively.

---

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND HOME DEPARTMENT REQUISITES

*We have a full line of these supplies and shall be glad to furnish descriptive circular upon application*

# The Canterbury Series *of* Little Gifts

Our Illustrated Catalogue this year shows a large and varied line of beautiful greeting cards, post cards, inexpensive calendars, booklets, etc., and will be mailed free upon request from our Chicago Office, Madison Terminal Building.